EXPLICIT REFERENCES TO NEW TESTAMENT VARIANT READINGS AMONG GREEK AND LATIN CHURCH FATHERS

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Amy M. Donaldson

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Brian Daley, Director

Graduate Program in Theology

Notre Dame, Indiana

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Abstract

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In his introduction to New Testament textual criticism, Eberhard Nestle stated a desideratum, later repeated by Bruce Metzger, for a collection, arranged according to time and locality, of all passages in which the church fathers appeal to New Testament manuscript evidence. Nestle began this project with a list of references; Metzger continued the work by examining the explicit references to variants by Origen and Jerome and expanding Nestle's list. This dissertation picks up where Metzger left off, expanding and evaluating the list. The purpose is to contribute to patristics and New Testament textual criticism in two ways: first, by providing a helpful catalogue of patristic texts that refer to variant readings; and second, by analyzing the collected data with a focus on the text-critical criteria used by the fathers.

The dissertation begins by considering the social and historical backdrop of the early church, especially textual scholarship in antiquity and its patristic application to the Old Testament. The explicit references to variants are then examined, first by individual father (organized by Greek and Latin), then by variant (for the variants discussed by

multiple authors). This information is then summarized in terms of literary genres in which the references occur and the criteria used to evaluate the variants. After a general assessment of New Testament textual scholarship by the early church (including recensional and scribal activity), patristic textual criticism is compared to modern practice to assess to what extent the church fathers engaged in textual criticism and what insights we can gain from them today.

The second volume contains the catalogue of explicit references to variants (each entry includes the variants and their textual evidence in modern critical editions, the Greek or Latin excerpt and English translation, and a brief discussion of the context). Passages that discuss textual problems but are not explicit references to variants are collected separately. In an appendix, the lists by Nestle and Metzger are compared alongside the list of texts in the catalogue, followed by another appendix on Bede, and a third appendix containing a brief biography and bibliography for each father cited in the catalogue.

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> I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples;
>   I will sing praises to you among the nations.
> For your steadfast love is as high as the heavens;
>   your faithfulness extends to the clouds. (Ps 57:9-10, NRSV)

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations for biblical and ancient works follow *The SBL Handbook of Style*, ed. by P. H. Alexander et al. (Peabody, MA: Henrickson, 1999), 73-84, 237-63. Only exceptions or omissions are listed below.

ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
Adult. conj.	*De adulterinis coniugiis*
AGLB	Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel
Aland	*The Text of the New Testament*, by K. Aland and B. Aland, trans. by E. F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989)
Altaner	*Patrology*, by B. Altaner, trans. by H. C. Graef (Freiburg: Herder and Herder, 1960)
Anc.	*Ancoratus*
ANF	*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, 10 vols. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885-96)
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*
Apoc.	Apocalypse of John
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum: Series graeca
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series latina
Comm.	*Commentarius/Commentarii*

CPG	*Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. M. Geerard, 5 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974-87)
CPL	*Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, ed. E. Dekkers (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995)
Cramer	*Catenae Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, by J. A. Cramer, 8 vols. (1838-44; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1967)
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
Drobner	*The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*, by H. R. Drobner, trans. by S. S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007)
Eng	English (verse numbering or translation)
Ep.	*Epistulae*
Ep. Eus.	*Epistula ad Eusebium, Marcellum, Vivianum, Carpum et ad Aegyptios*
Epi	Epiphanius volumes of GCS series
Eun.	*Adversus Eunomium*
Eus	Eusebius volumes of GCS series
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
FC	Fathers of the Church
Fr.	*Fragmenta* (scholia)
GCS	Griechische christliche Schriftsteller
Heine	*The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, trans. by R. E. Heine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
Heinrici	*Des Petrus von Laodicea Erklärung des Matthäusevangeliums*, ed. by C. F. G. Heinrici, Beitrage zur Geschichte und Erklärung des Neuen Testamentes 5 (Leipzig: Dürr, 1908)
Heither	Origen, *Commentarii in epistulam ad Romanos*, ed. and trans. T. Heither, 6 vols., Fontes Christiani 2 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1990-99)

Hist. eccl.	*Historia ecclesiastica*
Hom.	*Homiliae*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
Jo.	John
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
Kannengiesser	*Handbook of Patristic Exegesis*, by C. Kannengiesser, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2004)
l(l).	*line(s)*
Luc.	Luke
LXX	Septuagint
Metzger	*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, by B. M. Metzger, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 1994)
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
NA, NA[27]	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. by E. and E. Nestle, B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger, 27th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993)
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NPNF	*A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series 1 and 2, ed. by P. Schaff, 28 vols. (New York: Christian Literature, 1886-99)
NT	New Testament
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents

ODCC	*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, 3rd ed. rev. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)
Or	Origen volumes of GCS series
OT	Old Testament
parr.	parallel passages from Synoptic Gospels
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina
PO	Patrologia orientalis
Quaest. Marin.	*Quaestiones ad Marinum*
Quasten	*Patrology*, by J. Quasten, 3 vols. (1950; repr. Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 1995); vol. 4 ed. by A. Di Berardino, trans. by P. Solari (1986; repr. Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1995)
RB	*Revue biblique*
ResQ	*Restoration Quarterly*
Reuss	*Matthäus-Kommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche*, ed. by J. Reuss, TU 61 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957)
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLNTGF	Society of Biblical Literature: The New Testament in the Greek Fathers
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SD	Studies and Documents
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
Souter	*Pelagius's Exposition of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul*, by A. Souter, 3 vols., Texts and Studies 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922-31)

Staab	*Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, ed. K. Staab (Münster: Aschendorff, 1933)
StPatr	*Studia Patristica*
Supp. qu. Marin.	*Supplementa minora ad quaestiones ad Marinum*
Swanson	*New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus*, ed. by R. J. Swanson, 9 vols. (Matthew-Galatians) (Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press, 1995-2005)
Teske	Augustine, *Letters 100-155* (vol. II/2) and *Letters 156-210* (vol. II/3), trans. by R. Teske, Works of St. Augustine (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2003-4)
Tischendorf	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. by C. Tischendorf, 2 vols., 8th ed. critica maior (1872; repr. Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck, 1965)
TLG	Thesaurus linguae graecae: A Digital Library of Greek Literature (University of California, Irvine, 1972-)
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
Trin.	*De trinitate*
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
UBS, UBS^4	*The Greek New Testament*, ed. by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger, 4th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 1993)
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
Williams	*The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, trans. by F. Williams, 2 vols. (New York/Leiden: Brill, 1994 [vol. 2], 2009 [vol. 1, 2nd ed.])
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the 20th century, Eberhard Nestle noted in his introduction to New Testament textual criticism that, in spite of the difficulties inherent in working with patristic evidence, "a systematic examination of the Patristic quotations remains one of the most important tasks for the textual criticism on the N. T." One of the two major projects he envisioned to further this goal was "a collection, arranged according to time and locality, of all the passages in which the Fathers appeal to ἀντίγραφα."[1] Over sixty years later, Bruce Metzger rearticulated the same desideratum, "that a collection of *testimonia patristica*, arranged according to time and locality, be made of all those passages in which the Fathers appeal to manuscripts current in their own day." Like Nestle, Metzger's hope was that the assembly of such evidence would provide concrete text-critical data, unlike the more elusive biblical citations among the fathers, especially pertaining to "the accurate localizing and the precise dating of the emergence and circulation of variant readings."[2]

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[1] E. Nestle, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament* (trans. W. Edie; 1901; repr. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 154; German edition: *Einführung in das griechische Neue Testament* (2nd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1899). The second undertaking Nestle desired to see was "a collection of all the passages in the biographies of the Saints where mention is made of the writing of Biblical manuscripts" (*Introduction*, 154).

[2] B. M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963), 95. While Nestle and Metzger were primarily concerned with the Greek and Latin fathers, S. P. Brock has expanded the call to include Syriac sources

The foundation for such a project was laid by Nestle in an appendix listing those references known to him.[3] A generation later, Frank Pack made initial inroads into this topic by exploring the textual scholarship of Origen,[4] and then Metzger took up Nestle's baton by examining the variants discussed by Origen and Jerome and expanding Nestle's list.[5] However, a comprehensive treatment of these explicit references has yet to be undertaken. The intent of this dissertation, therefore, is to contribute to this area of need in NT textual criticism in two ways: first, by providing a helpful database for future study; and second, by analyzing the collected data with a focus on the text-critical criteria used by the fathers. The result is a catalogue of texts, in line with Nestle's and Metzger's original vision, and an evaluation of what type of scholarship the early church fathers were doing on the NT text.

("The Use of the Syriac Fathers," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the* Status Quaestionis [SD 46; ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 233; cf. also T. Baarda, "Dionysios bar Salibi and the Text of Luke 1.35," *Vigiliae Christianae* 17 [1963]: 229). Incidentally, in researching Bede for Appendix B, I also ran across the following comment (in the context of the backgrounds to text criticism during the Middle Ages): "As far as I am aware, no one has yet systematically studied the references to textual problems strewn throughout the corpus of patristic writings. . ." (P. Meyvaert, "Bede the Scholar," in *Famulus Christi: Essays in the Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede* [ed. G. Bonner; London: SPCK, 1976], 48).

[3] Nestle, *Introduction*, 340-42. See also Appendix A, below.

[4] F. Pack, "The Methodology of Origen as a Textual Critic in Arriving at the Text of the New Testament" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1948); idem, "Origen's Evaluation of Textual Variants in the Greek Bible," *Restoration Quarterly* 4 (1960): 139-46.

[5] Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen"; idem, "The Practice of Textual Criticism Among the Church Fathers" *StPatr* 12 (1975): 340-49; idem, "St. Jerome's Explicit References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (ed. E. Best and R. McL. Wilson; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 179-90. The latter article includes an addendum with the expanded version of the list from Nestle's appendix (see Appendix A, below).

1. Patristic Evidence in New Testament Textual Criticism

Nestle's call for a systematic evaluation of the patristic evidence is one that has been taken seriously by text critics, but with acknowledgment of both the value and the challenges of this material. In the quest to reconstruct the earliest attainable text of the NT, there are three main sources of evidence: the manuscripts, the versions, and the church fathers. The MS evidence is the most straightforward of the three, but its main limitation is the age and provenance of the extant material due to the accidents of history. The versions and fathers, on the other hand, can fill in some of the gaps left by the MSS, but both carry inherent difficulties. These complications have placed this evidence in a secondary or tertiary position to the MS data that dominate the modern critical editions, yet scholars continue to recognize the value of these resources. The importance of the patristic material, in particular, emerges repeatedly in the scholarly debate over the text (see further below), and as a result of this attention, resources for this evidence continue to improve. However, much work still remains to be done with the patristic evidence to allow it to attain its full potential in the practice of NT textual criticism.

One common use of the patristic evidence has been in the apparatuses of critical NT texts, beginning with the earliest editions. While Erasmus acknowledged the value of patristic material, it was the Complutensian Polyglot that first made minimal use of such evidence.[6] Over the centuries, this material became more prominent but was used only sporadically until the first systematic study was attempted by J. J. Griesbach in the 18th

[6] B. M. Metzger provides a helpful summary of the development of the patristic material in critical editions ("Patristic Evidence and the Textual Criticism of the New Testament," *NTS* 18 [1972]: 380-84).

century.[7] By the time of the major projects in the 20th century (Nestle-Aland, United Bible Societies, *Editio Critica Maior*, International Greek New Testament Project), the patristic material was a mainstay, but the apparatuses typically cite the name of the author with no indication of the source for the reference and little or no discernment among the type or quality of the evidence.

Along with this lack of discernment, the need to identify how closely an author cites from the text and determine how the citations may have been altered by scribes or editors to conform to a more common text type have also complicated the use of the patristic material.[8] The availability of good critical editions of the fathers' writings is of absolute necessity, and still lacking for many works, although the labor is ongoing.[9] Because many of these critical editions were not available to text critics until a generation ago, the earlier critical NT texts, which are still relied upon for their patristic data, may be based on outdated or unreliable material. Even in the latest critical NT texts, where scholars have employed the most recent editions of the fathers' works, the lack of distinction between quotations, allusions, or explicit discussions of variants among the patristic material has obscured the value of this evidence for other scholars.[10] Therefore, while textual critics such as William Petersen and Bart Ehrman have appealed to the

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[7] J. J. Griesbach, *Symbolae criticae* (Halle, 1785-93); cf. Metzger, "Patristic Evidence," 382.

[8] For an overview of these problems, see G. Fee, "The Use of the Greek Fathers for New Testament Textual Criticism," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 191-207.

[9] See Fee's assessment of the resources available by the mid-1990s ("Use of the Greek Fathers," 195-96).

[10] Fee especially is highly critical of the lack of adequate notations in the apparatus and offers a number of suggestions for improvement ("Use of the Greek Fathers," 201-4).

primacy of the patristic material over the much-favored papyri,[11] the challenges of this material and the abundance of seminal work yet to be done often limit the usefulness of the patristic evidence.

Traditionally, the goal of textual criticism has been the construction of a critical text or recovery of the original, but recent decades have seen an increased focus on the history of the transmission of the text; patristic evidence is an invaluable tool for both approaches. Although this material often takes a back seat to MS evidence in the critical editions, it becomes of primary importance when attempting to reconstruct the history of the text[12] since the MS evidence is often difficult to date and locate, whereas the fathers can more easily be identified by century and location (hence, Nestle's and Metzger's call for a list organized by time and locality). Therefore, in discussions of text types or regional or temporal variations in the text, it is the patristic material that emerges as a primary tool for building a solid foundation of facts. To this end, one recent series that attempts to provide better access to the text of an individual father is the Society of Biblical Literature series on The New Testament in the Greek Fathers.[13] While similar

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[11] B. D. Ehrman, "The Use and Significance of Patristic Evidence for NT Textual Criticism," and W. L. Petersen, "What Text Can New Testament Textual Criticism Ultimately Reach?" in *New Testament Textual Criticism, Exegesis, and Early Church History: A Discussion of Methods* (ed. by B. Aland and J. Delobel; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 118-35, 136-51. For a response, appealing to general practices of quotation and allusion among Jewish and Graeco-Roman authors (based on the work of C. D. Stanley [*Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (SNTSMS 74; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 267-337]), see L. W. Hurtado, "The New Testament in the Second Century: Text, Collections and Canon," in *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical and Exegetical Studies* (ed. J. W. Childers and D. C. Parker; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006), 15-18.

[12] Ehrman in particular emphasizes this use of the patristic material ("Use and Significance of Patristic Evidence," 123-27).

[13] To date, the following volumes have been published: B. D. Ehrman, *Didymus the Blind and the Text of the Gospels* (SBLNTGF 1; 1986); J. A. Brooks, *The New Testament Text of Gregory of Nyssa* (SBLNTGF 2; 1991); B. D. Ehrman, G. D. Fee, and M. W. Holmes, *The Text of the Fourth Gospel in the Writings of Origen*, vol. 1 (SBLNTGF 3; 1992); D. D. Hannah, *The Text of 1 Corinthians in the Writings of*

studies have been produced in the past, they were often based on inferior editions of the patristic works or lacked adequate methodology to evaluate the variants at hand.[14] The volumes in this SBL series have only begun to scratch the surface, but continued work in this direction will provide additional data that can be attributed to a specific date and location with a greater degree of certainty.

There is one approach to the patristic materials that does yield concrete data about variants without facing the challenges of determining the quality of biblical citations by a given author: focusing on specific patristic references to variant readings within the NT text. These examples contribute to our understanding of both the texts available to individual fathers and also textual scholarship in antiquity, allowing glimpses of how the authors treated the different readings available to them. This is the work that first Nestle and then Metzger called for, proposing a systematic examination of patristic references to MSS to elucidate the history of the NT text. While such an endeavor is not without its own challenges, it still provides valuable data and thus is the focus of the present study.

2. Parameters of Explicit References to Variants

As with any study that is based on the patristic writings, the research proposed by Nestle and Metzger has its own set of constraints. The lack of critical editions remains a problem, as well as issues of attribution (dubious and spurious writings), which are best

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Origen (SBLNTGF 4; 1997); J.-F. Racine, *The Text of Matthew in the Writings of Basil of Caesarea* (SBLNTGF 5; 2004); C. D. Osburn, *The Text of the Apostolos in Epiphanius of Salamis* (SBLNTGF 6; 2004); R. L. Mullen, *The New Testament Text of Cyril of Jerusalem* (SBLNTGF 7; 1997); C. P. Cosaert, *The Text of the Gospels in Clement of Alexandria* (SBLNTGF 9; 2008).

[14] Based on these inadequacies, Fee considers such studies to be virtually useless for subsequent scholarship ("Use of the Greek Fathers," 196-97).

clarified through careful editing and scholarship that, in many cases, is still wanting.[15] In addition, while the optimism of Nestle and Metzger that patristic quotations could be organized by time and locality is admirable, such precise dating for a single quotation often remains speculative at best. A number of fathers traveled or moved (for example, Origen and Jerome), and so the specific writing in which the quotation is contained must be pinpointed by date and location within the life of that author. Even when such precise dating can be established, it is also true that in a number of instances, the mention of MSS by a particular father is based upon not his own personal experience but a tradition that he is repeating (typically quoting or paraphrasing from an earlier writer). Therefore, not every mention of a variant attests MS evidence from the time and place of that particular author.

In order to pin down the exact dating or provenance of any given discussion of a variant, a number of factors must be considered—most importantly, the historical and social context in which such discussions occur. The type of evidence that may be gathered in a list of references to variants among the fathers is limited by certain circumstances, especially regarding what patristic writings survive to this day, and why and how they do. Associated with this is another important issue that necessarily precedes the ability to establish the date and location of any given discussion of a variant:

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[15] One telling example of this is Eusebius's *Quaestiones ad Marinum*, which is a key witness to the ending of Mark. The primary edition of this text is still Mai's revised edition from 1847 (reprinted in PG 22), and J. A. Kelhoffer stated only a decade ago that "the validity of the ascription to Eusebius has yet to be either questioned or confirmed by scholars who have discussed this important text" (*Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* [WUNT 2.112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], 6 n. 19; see further idem, "The Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum* and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark's Gospel," *ZNW* 92 [2001]: 81). The more recent study by C. Zamagni begins to address some of these needs, but more work on this topic remains to be done ("Les 'Questions et réponses sur les évangiles' d'Eusèbe de Césarée: Étude et édition du résumé grec" [ThD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2003]).

attribution, or authorship. The preservation of writings, and the names associated with various writings, are ultimately impacted by the historical and social circumstances surrounding them.

Thus, a brief overview of this backdrop will help to illuminate the various factors that affected discussions of the NT, and the complex web of influences and relationships behind the patristic and NT texts that remain extant today. This overview will be highly selective, based on those factors with the greatest implications for the writings and variants discussed in the following chapters and on the general treatment of the NT text. It is intended only as an introduction, highlighting key issues for more detailed examination later, rather than a full exploration of the early church. One other significant background, that of textual scholarship in antiquity and textual analysis applied to the OT, will be considered in the next chapter. A listing of all patristic authors or works under consideration in the current study, along with a brief introduction and limited bibliography for each, appears in Appendix C.

2.1. Historical and Social Factors Impacting Discussions of Variants

There were a number of historical and social factors that influenced discussions of the NT text. From Marcion to Arius to Origen, accusations of heresy impacted how particular variants were understood and where certain scholars drew the lines between trusted sources and enemies of the church. Christianity's shift from being a persecuted minority to the authorized religion of the Roman empire affected the production and preservation of texts, as well as the freedom to create new editions or translations, or the freedom to move the focus from defense against external attacks (apologetics) to threats

from within (Christological controversies). For centuries to come, which patristic texts were preserved, under what attributed authorship, and in what forms also followed the trends of orthodoxy and heresy. The location of and influences on significant scholars (along with the texts known to them and witnessed in their writings) were more fluid than static, crossing linguistic and political boundaries.

2.1.1. Persecution and Apologetics

When the NT was composed in the 1st century, the early church was struggling to find its place in relation to Judaism, pagan religions and philosophies, and the Roman empire. Persecution was a major theme in those writings, and a number of the earliest believers were reported to have been killed at the hands of the Romans. And yet, this hunted minority is the religion that would one day come to rule the empire. Even once Christianity was an accepted and established religion, the persecution did not necessarily end. When tension did not come from the outside, it often came from the inside, as the church struggled to define itself and its beliefs. Just as politics stood behind the early persecution of the movement as a whole, it often was intertwined with internal conflicts, both regional and empire-wide. This is the sometimes volatile, sometimes chaotic situation in which the NT documents were preserved and transmitted, and the early church fathers composed their various writings that included discussions of the NT text.

From the earliest days, the political and philosophical positions on the new Christian movement also had an impact on how freely it could spread and how readily it was accepted in new areas, and on the preservation of Christian texts. With persecution came the potential for the banning or destruction of Christian writings. In the earlier

centuries, persecution tended to be localized and focused on punishing the individual rather than on destroying property or objects. But a shift occurred in the mid-3rd century, particularly with Decius, as the emperors became more directly involved in ordering or enforcing edicts against the Christians.[16] Early in the 4th century, the campaigns against Christians began to include a specific focus on the destruction of Christian texts.[17] Although sacred texts such as copies of the Gospels were the main focus of such destruction, persecutors were not necessarily so discriminating when burning books owned or used by Christians. During this relatively short but intense period of persecution, between Diocletian and Constantine (303-313 CE), the destruction of religious texts no more obliterated all early Christian writing than it put an end to the Bible itself, but in some cases it may have limited the number or location of MSS available for copying by future generations.

One other notable way in which writings may have become lost is through the loss of libraries, due both to persecution and to the effects of time. The library of Caesarea, once a great cache of texts from Origen, Eusebius, and others, and used by great scholars like Jerome, eventually passed silently into history. After the peak of its reputation and activity in the 4th century, the library may have gone downhill if it lacked funding or donations to repair or replace older MSS or to acquire new works.[18] What

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[16] W. H. C. Frend, "Persecutions: Genesis and Legacy," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 1, *Origins to Constantine* (ed. M. M. Mitchell and F. M. Young; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 511, 513-14; R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 450.

[17] D. Sarefield, "The Symbolics of Book Burning: The Establishment of a Christian Ritual of Persecution," in *The Early Christian Book* (ed. W. E. Klingshirn and L. Safran; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 164-65; Frend, "Persecutions," 519.

[18] Jerome offers testimony of this, that even by his own day, the papyrus scrolls collected or copied under the supervision of Eusebius were deterioriating, and Euzoios, the bishop of Caesarea in the

was left of the library by the 7th century was likely destroyed in the Arab invasion.[19] This example symbolizes another source of lost works: libraries may fall into disrepair or be destroyed, and fragile texts may disintegrate, or materials may be recycled to overwrite obsolete texts with more relevant works. Also, although Christianity remained the religion of the Roman empire, the empire's borders did not remain constant, so that areas like Palestine and North Africa that for a season enjoyed freedom for Christian worship and literature once again fell into hostile hands, reverting the church back to a persecuted minority. Any text not preserved in enough copies or locations may become lost over time simply because of the vulnerability of the physical materials.

Particularly during the early centuries of the church, apologetics was an important focus as the Christians needed to defend their beliefs and practices against potential hostility by the empire and influential pagan writers.[20] At times, pagan scholars such as Celsus or Porphyry were aware of differences between various Gospel accounts or within

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370s, was making an effort to preserve the texts by having them copied onto parchment (Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 113; A. Grafton and M. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006], 215).

[19] H. Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 160. While Gamble points out, on a positive note, that many works which would otherwise be lost "probably owe their perseverance to having been disseminated from [the library at Caesarea]," the fact that "many early Christian works now lost are known only through notices of their presence there" simply highlights that with the loss of the Caesarean library came the loss of those works. Eusebius, through his numerous quotations, provides a glimpse of the books that library may have held, and equally represents the many works that have subsequently been lost; as M. J. Hollerich puts it, "his books are treasure troves for scholars on the trail of lost or fragmentary works" (*Eusebius of Caesarea's* Commentary on Isaiah*: Christian Exegesis in the Age of Constantine* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], 2; cf. Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, 202-3). In some ways, then, the works of Eusebius and perhaps others like Jerome are all that we have left of the impressive library at Caesarea.

[20] On the relationship between apologetics and the text of the NT, see especially W. C. Kannaday, *Apologetic Discourse and the Scribal Tradition: Evidence of the Influence of Apologetic Interests on the Text of the Canonical Gospels* (SBL Text-Critical Studies 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004). While Christian dialogue with the Jews was also a significant realm of apologetics in the early church and impacted discussion of OT variants, such conversations do not factor into the references to NT variants and so are not considered here (for a description of patristic scholarship on the text of the OT, see Chap. 1, below).

the MS tradition of a particular biblical writing and used that as fodder in their charges against Christianity. Porphyry himself was an experienced editor and literary critic and well familiar with Origen's scholarship.[21] Therefore, it is no surprise to find that Porphyry was alert to discrepancies among Christian writings and raised issues such as Matthew's inaccuracy of introducing the quotation of a psalm as a prophecy of Isaiah, and possibly the contradictions between the various words spoken by Jesus on the cross (including a variant within the text of Mark).[22] Celsus also brought up issues that occasioned discussion of textual variations, such as the question of whether Jesus's disciples included tax collectors.[23]

2.1.2. Theological Controversies

When Christianity was still an oppressed minority, there was more need to focus theological defenses toward outsiders and write apologetically to the emperor or vocal pagan opponents. As Christianity gained more of a foothold in the empire, however, and especially once it had become protected by the state, the church could turn its gaze inward; discussions focused more on what defined orthodoxy and heresy, so that the chief opponents were no longer outside but inside the church. Scribes and textual scholars also had more freedom, and heightened demand, to produce scriptural texts for use in the

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[21] R. L. Wilken, *The Christians As the Romans Saw Them* (2nd ed.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 126-63, esp. 129-30, 144-48. On Porphyry's knowledge and refutation of Origen, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.19.2-9.

[22] See §27 on **Matt 13:35** and §53 on **Mark 15:34** (it is not certain that the latter is a quote from Porphyry, but at the very least it is "Porphyrian," or in other words, from one of his followers). Cf. Kannaday, *Apologetic Discourse*, 68-75. As R. M. Berchman (*Porphyry against the Christians* [Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005]) describes, Porphyry was a skilled solver of "Homeric Problems" who thus developed a sharp eye for "Biblical Problems" (14).

[23] See §50 on **Mark 3:18**. On Celsus, see Wilken, *Christians As the Romans Saw Them*, 94-125.

churches. Church hierarchy evolved, as councils were convened and a heavier hand intervened in an attempt to regulate and regularize matters of text and canon. The emperors, who had once used book burning to suppress Christianity, now used it to support the orthodox teachings of the church, whether by burning outsider works such as magical texts or Manichean writings, or to condemn works within the church that had been deemed heretical.[24]

Eusebius of Caesarea is a key figure in the preservation and discussion of the NT text who bridged the two eras, from the destruction to the proliferation of the Christian book. Eusebius received his textual training in the tradition of Origen, passed along by Eusebius's mentor and a great admirer of Origen, Pamphilus. Pamphilus was imprisoned for over two years before he was martyred in 310; while Eusebius was also imprisoned for a time, he escaped the same fate.[25] A quarter of a century after seeing his mentor executed by the empire for his faithful production of Christian books, Eusebius was requested by the emperor, then Constantine, to produce fifty copies of Scripture.[26] Thus, in his own lifetime, Eusebius had seen extreme swings in imperial policy, from tolerance to persecution to patronage. The imprisonment of Pamphilus and many of his companions, however, did not stop them from copying and studying biblical and Christian texts, and textual scholarship in Caesarea not only survived the persecution but

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[24] Sarefield, "Symbolics of Book Burning," 170-71; cf. D. L. Dungan, *Constantine's Bible: Politics and the Making of the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 120.

[25] T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 154.

[26] Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, 216-21; Dungan, *Constantine's Bible*, 121-22.

flourished. But Pamphilus, like the man that he emulated—Origen—had his scholarly work cut short when he gave his life for the gospel.

This respect for Origen shown by Pamphilus and Eusebius also anticipates the next form of persecution that would come once the church had the freedom to focus internally rather than externally. Christian theology and vocabulary had continued to develop and became more strictly defined after the lifetime of Origen, so that by the time of Pamphilus and Eusebius, Origen's work was under scrutiny and in need of defense. Thus, the imprisoned Pamphilus, with the assistance of Eusebius, wrote and published the *Apology for Origen*.[27] But the attack on Origen at the beginning of the 4th century was nothing in comparison to the accusations that would erupt at the end of that century, first with Epiphanius and then in the dispute between Jerome and Rufinus.

Before the controversy arose, Jerome and Rufinus were friends and colleagues, having spent time together in Rome and Aquileia before each traveled east, eventually settling not far from each other in Palestine.[28] During those early years, both men were admirers of Origen, although of the two of them, Jerome had produced more Latin translations of Origen.[29] Although Epiphanius had begun to stir up charges against Origen in the 370s in his *Panarion* and *Ancoratus*, works against heresy, the controversy finally came to a boil in the 390s, with Jerome (siding with Epiphanius, against Origen)

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[27] Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book,* 203-5; E. A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 159-63.

[28] M. Vessey, "Jerome and Rufinus," in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (ed. F. Young, L. Ayres, and A. Louth; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 323.

[29] J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (1975; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 75-77, 143-44; Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 159.

and Rufinus (siding with John of Jerusalem, for Origen) landing on opposite sides.[30] It was his translation of Origen that pulled Rufinus deeper into the controversy, and the controversy that compelled him to translate more of Origen's works.[31] For Jerome, while he did not cease to rely on Origen's commentaries or textual scholarship, he was more discriminating in his use of Origen and tried to greater distance himself from Origen's theology.

One important thing becomes clear from this controversy: it was not necessary to agree with Origen's theology or interpretation of the text in order to respect his scholarship on the form of the text itself. This was already apparent in the fact that Jerome, despite his use of Origen's commentaries, did not necessarily approve of Origen's allegorical approach to Scripture.[32] Likewise, Jerome never ceased to respect Origen's abilities and accomplishments as a textual scholar, even if he critiqued or corrected Origen's theology on a number of points. Jerome's approach to Origen before and after the controversy may be illustrated through Jerome's commentaries on

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[30] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 85-86, 94-95. As for the very personal attacks between the once-friends, Clark describes that it seems Jerome's primary mission in the controversy was "to save his own skin while lacerating that of Rufinus" (121-22).

[31] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 160, 183, 187; Vessey, "Jerome and Rufinus," 324-25.

[32] Jerome's preference was to adhere to a literal interpretation first, then to resort to allegory secondarily. He grew more critical of the allegorical method over time, which was likely influenced by the Origenist controversy. Not surprisingly, most of his use of allegory in his commentaries is drawn directly from Origen. See Kelly, *Jerome*, 60; H. F. D. Sparks, "Jerome as Biblical Scholar," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to Jerome* (ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 538; D. Brown, "Jerome and the Vulgate," in *A History of Biblical Interpretation*, vol. 1, *The Ancient Period* (ed. A. J. Hauser and D. F. Watson; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 368-70. Brown gives a fuller examination of Jerome's use of allegory in *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992), 139-65, but Brown's work should be accepted only with scrutiny, as he is often blatantly incorrect in his understanding of Jerome with respect to matters of textual criticism (see, for example, Brown's misunderstanding of Jerome's discussion of **Eph 5:14** (§153): Brown says that Jerome uses the story about Adam's skull as a form of allegory, when in actuality Jerome is critical of this story and says that it does not fit the context [Brown even misses the point that the story is related to a variant reading, not the version of the verse that Brown quotes; "Jerome and the Vulgate," 368]; for further critique of Brown, see Chap. 1, n. 118, below).

Ephesians and Matthew. The *Commentary on Ephesians* was published in the 380s, before the controversy came to a head, and was one of the works that Rufinus latched onto in his *Apology against Jerome* as an example of Jerome's emulation of Origen.[33] In direct response to these charges, when Jerome composed his *Commentary on Matthew* in 398, he made a concerted effort to explain where his own theology differed from that of Origen, and even to condemn or correct Origen's exegesis at points.[34] But for all that, it did not stop Jerome from depending heavily on Origen's commentary, just as he had with Ephesians. For the most part, Jerome still respected Origen's exegesis and felt that it was possible to use his work as long it was done with discernment.[35]

On a smaller scale, Jerome's ally in the controversy, Epiphanius, also showed that it was possible to disrespect Origen's theology without disrespecting his textual efforts. In a letter, Epiphanius cites Origen, along with Clement and Eusebius, as part of the chain of authority that passed on a textual tradition about the hour of the crucifixion in Mark and John (**John 19:14**; §93). He also spoke of Origen's work on the Hexapla in positive terms.[36] If Epiphanius and Jerome, the chief opponents of Origen's questionable

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[33] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 123; she evaluates, "In some respects, Jerome proved to be his own worst enemy, for by his repeated urging of readers to examine for themselves his treatment of Origen in his early writings, especially in his *Commentaries on Ephesians* and *on Ecclesiastes*, written in the late 380s, he sowed the seeds for accusations of Origenism against himself"(122).

[34] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 127-28; Kelly, *Jerome*, 222-25.

[35] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 127, 138-39. Nor was Jerome alone in this approach: "When asked why he now read the books he had so recently condemned, Theophilus allegedly replied that Origen's works could be compared to a meadow: one could pluck the beautiful flowers and step over the thorny ones, a view identical with that held by both Jerome and Rufinus in their more rational moments. This last point again brings home the extent to which the antagonists agreed in their approach to Origen: to use what was edifying and discard what was not" (Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 38).

[36] Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64; *De mensuris et ponderibus*; see F. Williams, trans., *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, vol. 1 (2nd ed.; New York/Leiden: Brill, 2009), xvii-xviii. For a brief discussion,

theology, were not willing to condemn his work wholesale, that should bode well for Origen's continuing legacy, despite the controversy surrounding him. However, Origen's name came to bear a certain stigma, and his condemnation for heresy eventually led to the loss of many of his works. While Jerome and Rufinus survived their association with Origen, his Alexandrian heir Didymus did not: he was condemned as an Origenist in the 6th century, leading to the destruction of many of his works as well.[37]

Internal Christian disputes and the conflict over orthodoxy versus heresy not only affected the preservation of certain writings but also provided a context in which variants were mentioned. Therefore, when a potentially contentious passage was found missing in some copies, or added in others, the opponents were often accused of amending the text to fit their own theology.[38] Such accusations particularly arose in Christological controversies over passages that touched on the humanity or divinity of Jesus, or the relationship between the persons of the Trinity. Arianism was one such disputed Christology that affected discussions of the text. The conflict with Arius arose in the early 4th century in Alexandria, but long after his death in 336, the theology termed as Arianism and defined as a denial of the Son's divinity (or, as an emphasis on Christ as created, in defense of God's transcendence) continued to cause dispute and division—

along with excerpts of the relevant Greek texts and English translation, see Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book,* 92-94, 318-20.

[37] Evagrius Ponticus was also condemned alongside Didymus; see R. A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria: Virtue and Narrative in Biblical Scholarship* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 1, 3, 166 n. 3.

[38] Accusations of such changes were not limited to Scripture. Rufinus claimed that Origen's *Against Celsus* had been interpolated by his opponents, and he listed examples of interpolations in the works of several other Christian writers to reinforce this claim (Clark, *Origenist Controversy,* 164).

often along political lines.[39] Athanasius emerged as the chief opponent of Arianism and defender of the doctrines codified at the Council of Nicaea (in 325). Contentions against Arianism are found among the works of a number of fathers, both Latin writers such as Marius Victorinus and Ambrose, and Greek writers such as Apollinaris. The politics involved also impacted the lives of fathers like Hilary, who was deposed and exiled under the Arian sympathizer Emperor Constantius II.[40]

Another significant conflict arose surrounding the Antiochene scholars after the spread of Nestorianism. Of concern in this controversy were particularly the relationship between the humanity and divinity of Christ and the implications of referring to Mary as the "God-bearer" (θεοτόκος).[41] The root of this condemned theology was traced back before Nestorius himself to his mentor, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and his mentor before him, Diodore of Tarsus. The teachings of all three men were condemned, leading to the subsequent loss of many of their works.[42] A number of other commentators on Scripture, some of whom made note of variants, were also accused of heresy, either during their own lifetimes or beyond. One of these was Apollinaris, whose own Christology, despite

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[39] J. R. Lyman, "Heresiology: The Invention of 'Heresy' and 'Schism,'" in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 2, *Constantine to c. 600* (ed. A. Casiday and F. W. Norris; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 299-302; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 193-200.

[40] W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 523-43 (on Athanasius), 634-35 (on Apollinaris), 535 (on Hilary); D. G. Hunter, "Fourth-Century Latin Writers: Hilary, Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Ambrose," in Young et al., *Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, 302-17.

[41] A key teaching in this conversation was Theodore of Mopsuestia's position on the relationship of the divinity and humanity of Christ at the crucifixion, for which **Heb 2:9** (§179; cf. §§176, 180) was a pivotal text. See Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 1:245-47, 254-55.

[42] M. F. Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School," in Ackroyd and Evans, *Cambridge History of the Bible*, 1:490-92; Frend, *Rise of Christianity*, 752-61, 850-53; cf. A. Louth, "John Chrysostom and the Antiochene School to Theodoret of Cyrrhus," in Young et al., *Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, 342-44, 347-49.

his defense of the Nicene faith against Arianism, subsequently fell into disrepute. Severus of Antioch likewise was condemned for his Christological views, as a Monophysite (emphasizing the one nature of Christ), and Pelagius stirred up opposition with his stance on original sin and grace.[43] Thus, a great number of works by these condemned writers were destroyed, leading to the preservation of their writings mostly in translations, catenae, or under the names of other authors.

2.2. Preservation and Attribution

2.2.1. Extant Materials

Since the teachings of so many fathers became controversial, or even condemned, the writings that have survived over the centuries are often those preserved the most indirectly, or the most creatively. One major source of such writings is translations. For example, a number of Origen's commentaries or homilies that are no longer extant in Greek, or only in fragmentary form, exist in Latin translation—primarily thanks to Rufinus and Jerome (and, in part, thanks to the Origenist controversy which spurred on Rufinus in his translations).[44] The benefit of such translations is that they are more commonly preserved under the name of the original author, so that attribution, in that sense, is not an issue. However, with translation comes the question of translation style (whether literal or free), and the related issue of editorial liberties by the translator. In the case of scriptural quotations within translations, it is also uncertain whether the text presented therein represents the original author's version, or if quotations have been

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[43] Frend, *Rise of Christianity*, 634-35 (on Apollinaris), 838-43 (on Severus), 673-83 (on Pelagius).

[44] Cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, 77; Vessey, "Jerome and Rufinus," 323.

modified to the Scriptures used by the translator's audience. Rufinus's translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* bears many marks of the latter, since there are a number of references to readings contained in the Latin copies, which were not Origen's original comments.[45]

A set of homilies by Severus of Antioch provides an excellent example of the types of issues related to preserving early materials. After Severus's denunciation as a Monophysite, many of his writings were destroyed. The texts that remain today are primarily in Syriac.[46] Of his cathedral homilies, though, there is one in particular that is also extant in Greek: *Homily* 77. The reason it survived the centuries is because it was not credited to Severus but instead was transmitted alternately under the names of Gregory of Nyssa and Hesychius of Jerusalem. Textually speaking, this has provided useful evidence for the modern scholar since the Syriac translation may be compared against the Greek, and the Greek is available in more than one copy. However, in terms of attribution, it has created many headaches.[47] This is but one representative, then, of a common problem: on the positive side, a number of otherwise controversial or condemned writings were preserved for posterity by attributing them to orthodox writers; on the negative side, it has complicated modern discussions of these works and authors

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[45] On Rufinus as a translator, see especially M. Wagner, *Rufinus, the Translator* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1945). On the *Commentary on Romans* in particular, see C. P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung* (AGLB 10; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1985). On Jerome's theory of translation, see Kelly, *Jerome*, 72, and the example of Jerome's translation of Origen's *Homilies on Luke* (Kelly, *Jerome*, 143).

[46] P. Allen and C. T. R. Hayward, *Severus of Antioch* (The Early Church Fathers; New York: Routledge, 2004), 31-32.

[47] See §54 on **Mark 16:2** and especially M.-A. Kugener, "Une homélie de Sévère d'Antioche attribuée à Grégoire de Nysse et à Hésychius de Jérusalem," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 3 (1898): 435-51.

by placing the authorship of many works in doubt, and in leading to sometimes conflicting opinions on who originally authored a given work.[48]

Another source of writings that is both beneficial and complicated is the fragments, in the forms of quotations by other authors and excerpts among the catenae. Many condemned writers, particularly Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, have benefited greatly from these practices of quotation and excerpting, since some of their commentaries now exist only in fragments. Of course, such quotations come with their own set of issues. Attribution is sometimes a problem, when the same scholion is passed on under the names of different writers in different sources, or without any name attached at all.[49] Or, particularly among the catenae, pieces of different writings could be patched together, some attributed to an author and others not, so that it is difficult to distinguish which portions belong to the identified writer. Excerpts could also be paraphrased or otherwise adapted to their context. Thus, when a work is available only through a translation and fragments in the original language (such as Origen's commentaries on Romans and Matthew, available in Latin and in fragmentary Greek), comparison of the two may at times yield little word-for-word correspondence. The question, then, is whether the translation is free and the Greek preserves the original wording, or whether the translation more directly represents the original and the Greek is a paraphrase or abridgement—the solution sometimes lies somewhere between the two.

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[48] For example, see §109 on **Rom 8:11** (originally attributed to Athanasius, whose authorship is now rejected, but some scholars have argued this is by Didymus).

[49] For examples of multiple attribution, see §3 on **Matt 4:17** (Cyril of Alexandria and Origen); §15 on **Matt 6:1** (Apollinaris and Origen); §97 on **Acts 14:26** (Ammonius and Oecumenius); §159 on **Phil 3:14** (Oecumenius and Origen). For anonymous scholia, see Appendix A.

Besides being preserved through the works of other writers, fragmentary works have also surfaced over time through more recent discoveries of MSS, such as papyri. One archaeological find in particular has been helpful in our understanding of Didymus and Origen.[50] The Tura papyri (discovered in Egypt in 1941) were copied in the 6th century at a monastery near the cave where they were found and were either hidden or buried not long after, following the condemnation of Didymus's and Origen's works. Combined with efforts to preserve works under the name of other authors, this illustrates how official condemnations of certain works or writers were not necessarily universally accepted, and it is thanks to subversive efforts to preserve the works of certain authors, or the freedom to preserve their works in certain communities (such as the works of Severus among Syrian Monophysites), that has made at least secondary or fragmentary versions of such writings available today. However, for all that has been preserved, there are many other ancient writings we know of only by name that have now been lost, some only by the passage of time rather than by an intentional suppression. Thus, any list of where variant readings are discussed is necessarily limited by the writings that history has brought down to us. And, if the Tura papyri are any indication, there may be still more to find.

2.2.2. Attribution and Authorship

A common theme among many of these forms in which writings were preserved is the issue of attribution, or authorship. Works that could not exist under the name of the

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[50] See Layton, *Didymus the Blind*, 1-4; Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 307 n. 109, and the bibliography there. As Layton points out, we are greatly indebted to the find of the Tura papyri for our current knowledge of Didymus's works; examples of that indebtedness may be found in this study (see §§85, 172).

original author were preserved under the names of more orthodox authors or anonymously. In some cases, this leads to multiple attributions, and in others, to no attribution at all. The modern scholar is left to determine, first of all, whether the name attached to any given work is accurate, and second, if it is not accurate, who the original author may have been. The best resources available for such investigations are the undisputed writings by the author to whom the work is attributed, and those by the potentially original author. This becomes complicated, however, when the extant works of the potential author are only fragmentary or all have the same problem of attribution, leaving very little concrete grounds for comparison. Thus, while scholars may agree that a particular work does not belong to the author under whose name is has been transmitted, there may be a gamut of opinions on who the authentic author of that work actually is.

Identifying original authorship can be especially complicated not only on the level of complete works but also for individual lines or paragraphs. The two situations in which this is particularly true is with translations and unidentified quotations or paraphrases. As noted above, translations could be either free or literal, and often were updated by the translator for a particular audience, especially in terms of the version of Scripture that is used as a lemma. Once the author's and translator's voices are blended together in the final product, it is often very difficult to distinguish them from one another on the level of individual comments. Origen's commentaries and homilies are a great example of this, in the matters of both translations and unidentified quotations. Both the *Commentary on Romans* (translated by Rufinus) and the *Homilies on Luke* (translated by Jerome) contain examples of comments about variants that were apparently inserted by

the translator—but because they flow with Origen's argument, and because Origen himself is known to make such comments, not all scholars agree on which comments were made by Origen and which by the translators.[51] On the flip side, Jerome is known to heavily quote or paraphrase Origen's commentaries in his own, particularly the commentaries on Ephesians and Matthew.[52] However, Jerome does not identify which portions are from Origen, or how literally, and which portions are his own contribution. Only the extant fragments from Origen's commentaries give us a basis for comparison.[53] This is then another situation in which the two voices are blended together into one work; and when a variant is noted and commented upon, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether that is Jerome's own insight or whether he borrowed the comment from Origen.

The two different situations, of translation or unidentified quotations, come to a head in the case of Jerome's *Homilies on Psalms*. These works have long been attributed to Jerome, but recently the question has been raised whether these are actually Origen's homilies that Jerome has translated.[54] However, if Jerome as a translator is free to insert

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[51] For example, see §107 on **Rom 7:6** (T. P. Scheck [FC 104] attributes the mention of the variant to Origen, but Hammond Bammel says it likely comes from Rufinus [*Römerbrieftext*, 220-22]); and §62 on **Luke 1:46** (J. Lienhard [FC 94] apparently assigns the mention of the variant to Origen, and B. M. Metzger includes this in his discussion of Origen's references to variants; but Metzger also notes that Zahn attributes the discussion of the variant to Jerome ["Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963), 86 n. 20]).

[52] Kelly, *Jerome*, 145-46, 222-23.

[53] One helpful comparison of Greek fragments and Latin translation is R. E. Heine's English translation, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), which presents the commentaries in parallel columns to show where Jerome is directly dependent on Origen. Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, also provides a thorough examination of Rufinus's contribution to Origen's *Commentary on Romans* and a comparison to the extant Greek fragments.

[54] V. Peri, *Omelie origeniane sui Salmi: contributo all'identificazione del testo latino* (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolic vaticana, 1980); see also G. Coppa, *74 omelie sul libro dei Salmi* (Torino: Paoline, 1993), 11-32. Not all scholars have accepted Peri's theory.

his own comments, and as a commentator he reproduces large sections of other works, then to assess whether he is the translator or author of these homilies may simply be splitting hairs. Either way, on the level of individual comments we must still determine whether they originally belong to Origen or Jerome. While this is also the case for a wider range of authors and translators and for a broader spectrum of topics, such as particular theological views, the relationship between Origen and Jerome is of the largest interest for this study: these two figures understood the most about the NT text, and commented the most frequently on variants. Therefore, it becomes the most difficult, and the most crucial, to distinguish their individual voices on the matter of textual variants once they have become melded together in an individual work.

Jerome's use of Origen is certainly not the only example of such borrowing and blending. In his *Ep.* 120 to Hedibia, Jerome extensively paraphrases Eusebius's *Quaestiones ad Marinum*, both the answers and the questions (see §57). Even though Jerome himself heavily borrowed from other writers, he was highly critical of the same practice by Ambrose in *On the Holy Spirit*, a work that Ambrose largely adapted from Greek authors such as Didymus and Basil.[55] The fact that Jerome can both criticize and utilize the practice shows the ambiguity between what constituted plagiarism and what was a common and expected practice of building on the work of one's predecessors. In either case, if the borrowed work is no longer extant, while it is helpfully preserved by the later author, the challenge of distinguishing the earlier voice from the later, especially on the level of individual comments, still remains. Understandably, if we are to pinpoint

[55] Kelly (*Jerome*, 144) points out that the same applies to Ambrose's *Commentary on Luke*, which borrows from Origen and other Greeks. Cf. B. Ramsey, *Ambrose* (The Early Church Fathers; New York: Routledge, 1997), 52-54, who also notes the irony that Ambrose's *Commentary on Luke*, in turn, was heavily borrowed from, without acknowledgement, by Maximus of Turin (53).

a work—or, as is the interest here, the discussion of a variant—by time and location, it is necessary first to establish who is the author. With so much difficulty in attribution, this often is easier said than done.

2.3. Influences and Traditions

While influence and borrowing are more visible on the level of literary adaptation, such trends would also have taken place on an oral level or through personal contact. Thus, the borrowing of ideas and transmission of traditions were a product of both literature and word of mouth. It is important to trace back these traditions when identifying who originally commented on a particular variant, if the variant is to be located by date and place. Many of the fathers who comment on variants had relationships with one another, often through their studies or spheres of influence. Origen in particular left a lasting legacy in both Alexandria and Caesarea, not to mention the spread of his scholarship into the West through the Latin translations of his works. In Alexandria, that legacy influenced scholars like Didymus the Blind; Jerome and Rufinus, in turn, both spent time in Alexandria where they studied with Didymus.[56] In Caesarea, Origen's legacy was preserved both through his library (not only the books that he used, but especially his own works that he contributed, such as the Hexapla) and through the efforts of Pamphilus, who then became the mentor to Eusebius (known more fully as

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[56] Layton, *Didymus the Blind,* 1; Kelly, *Jerome,* 59-60.

Eusebius Pamphili or Eusebios Pamphilou, illustrating the impact that a mentor could have on the life and work of a student).[57]

Beyond merely the work of Origen, schools of thought and influence can be traced through Antioch as well. Jerome, in his travels, also journeyed north and studied under Apollinaris of Laodicea while in Antioch. A chain of either direct teaching or simply tradition may be traced from Diodore of Tarsus to John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia, from Theodore to Theodoret of Cyrus, and (more negatively, at least for its impact on Antioch's legacy) from Theodore to Nestorius. In any of these cases, the discussion of a variant could easily be passed along orally, representing a link in the chain of tradition that has since been lost to us. The anecdote related by Jerome about a sermon based on the variant in **Eph 5:14** (§153; see further below) highlights this possibility of oral tradition: it may be at times that individuals, or entire congregations, knew of variants or explanations of them only from having heard them mentioned by others.[58]

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[57] Although many historians seem to treat the patronymic Pamphili as merely a term of honor, there remains the question whether Pamphilus actually legally adopted Eusebius (Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 94). Pamphilus is known to have been a wealthy benefactor of the library at Caesarea, and that patronage relationship may have eventually extended to include Eusebius in a formal sense (cf. Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book,* 21, 231). Either way, there was clearly a close relationship between the mentor and protégé (see further C. Kannengiesser, "Eusebius of Caesarea, Origenist," in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* [ed. H. W. Attridge and G. Hata; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992], 435-39). Kannengiesser refers to Pamphilus emphasizing the succession of teachers (as distinct from the succession of bishops) in passing on the faith, which he learned in Alexandria through the catechetical school and carried with him in principle to Caesarea (438).

[58] In such a case, when the author is aware of a variant through its reading in church, while this does mean that the individual has not necessarily seen a MS with that reading, if the text being read is read accurately, then this is still represents a MS with that variant (the MS read in the church). However, there is also the possibility that there is an error in reading or in hearing, so that the variant is actually created not by a scribe, but by a reader or the faulty interpretation of the hearer. Thus, the same type of error possible in a setting where MSS are copied by dictation may also emerge in any setting where a text is heard rather than seen—while such errors of hearing would not appear in the MSS (and thus do not affect the written text), they may impact the discussion of variants. Just imagine the confusion that could be created by a lector with a lisp. In Jerome's example, it is unlikely that he misunderstood the reading since the entire

One interesting case study is the tradition passed down about a variant in **John 19:14** and the Markan parallel. The earliest written testimony of this tradition that we have is from Eusebius (§94). Epiphanius (§93), however, traces the tradition from Eusebius back to Origen and then Clement of Alexandria. If Origen and Clement wrote anything about this variant, those writings are now lost. But, particularly in the case of transmission from Clement to Origen, it is also possible that the tradition was passed not in written form, but in some oral context (even indirectly, as a teaching of Clement passed along through another source in Alexandria to Origen). On the flip side, though, the literature shows quite clearly the impact of the tradition at least from Eusebius forward (although some of the later works may have been repeating Origen rather than Eusebius). The tradition is repeated not only by Epiphanius, but also by Jerome (§95), Ammonius (§91), and in the *Chronicon Paschale* (§92), and later by Theophylact (paraphrasing Eusebius; §96).

This example highlights the need for discernment when the same variant is addressed by multiple authors: while on the surface it appears that quite a handful of writers discuss this variant in John, the truth is that they are not actually attesting their own knowledge of a variant, or even their own opinion about a possible scribal corruption (which is more the case with this tradition); they are merely passing on comments that originated long before their own time. The tradition may be valuable in understanding the MSS available in 2nd-century Alexandria, but apart from any additions or modifications to the tradition, it tells us nothing about the MSS known to Epiphanius or Jerome. While with this variant, the helpful testimony of Epiphanius, tracing the

sermon illustration was built on it, but this anecdote simply highlights that orality must be taken into account.

tradition, and the witnesses that essentially repeat Eusebius help to make the borrowing more apparent, it may be in other cases that a tradition or duplicated discussion is now extant only in one author. With no grounds for comparison, it is impossible to fully identify such later discussions as actually the witness of an earlier writer. Considering the widespread influence of Origen, however, and his prolific comments on the NT text, the caution should always be kept in mind (particularly for a writer who rarely notes variants) that when a father mentions a variant reading, he may be attesting the comments of an earlier writer or teacher (such as Origen) rather than the actual MS evidence available in his own day and time.

2.4. Location and Dating

Even when the discussion of a variant by a particular church father is in a writing of undisputed authorship, other factors come into play when using that reference to pinpoint the variant itself by date and location. One important variable is the extensive travels by some of the fathers. While many were established churchmen, serving long periods of their lives in particular sees or monastic communities, circumstances such as studies, promotions, persecutions, and exiles kept these authors on the move. This requires understanding not only where a father lived or traveled, but at what date, particularly in relation to when he composed his various writings since establishing the location for a work is often tied up with the question of dating. For some works or fathers, dating is fairly clear, at least within a range of a few years or relative to other works by that author. But for other writers, it is difficult enough to find exact dates for the father himself, let alone any of his works.

Origen, as always, stands as a key example. Although he was born and bred in Alexandria and began his scholarly career there, tensions with Bishop Demetrius eventually forced Origen to resettle in Caesarea.[59] Origen clearly had a lasting impact in both regions, and he may have encountered different biblical MSS, and therefore different variants, in each location. One work of Origen's that has proved a crucible for such issues is his *Commentary on John*. This was a long-term project (written over a span of possibly twenty years) that he began in Alexandria and continued after his move to Caesarea.[60] This has therefore prompted studies into Origen's witness to the text of John, and especially whether the text he uses shows any significant shifts between the portions of the commentary composed in Alexandria and in Caesarea.[61] Yet, the division of Origen's life between these two locations is rather simple compared to the more expansive travels of some early Christian writers.

A number of fathers in the 4th and 5th centuries represent the vast areas covered especially during the education and youth of scholars of means (or, the careers of advanced scholars who were well-funded). Basil is identified by the city where he eventually became bishop, Caesarea in Cappadocia, but he originally hailed from Pontus; he received his training in Caesarea, as well as Constantinople and Athens, and traveled

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[59] J. W. Trigg, *Origen* (The Fathers of the Church; New York: Routledge, 1998), 15-16.

[60] R. E. Heine, trans., *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel according to John, Books 1-10* (FC 80; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 4-5.

[61] See R. V. G. Tasker, "The Text of the Fourth Gospel Used by Origen in his *Commentary on John*," *JTS* 37 (1936): 146-55; B. D. Ehrman, G. D. Fee, and M. W. Holmes, *The Text of the Fourth Gospel in the Writings of Origen*, vol. 1 (SBLNTGF 3; Atlanta: Scholars, 1992). Cf. K. W. Kim, "Origen's Text of John in His *On Prayer, Commentary on Matthew*, and *Against Celsus*," *JTS* n.s. 1 (1950): 74-84; G. D. Fee, "The Text of John in Origen and Cyril of Alexandria: A Contribution to Methodology in the Recovery and Analysis of Patristic Citations," *Biblica* 52 (1971): 357-94; W. L. Petersen, "The Text of the Gospels in Origen's Commentaries on John and Matthew," in *Origen of Alexandria: His World and Legacy* (ed. C. Kannengiesser and W. Petersen; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 34-47; B. D. Ehrman, "Heracleon, Origen, and the Text of the Fourth Gospel," *Vigiliae christianae* 47 (1993): 105-18.

to a number of places around the East before settling down to begin his career.[62] Jerome and Rufinus followed paths similar to one another: both went to Rome for their education, spent time in Aquileia, traveled east toward Egypt and Jerusalem, and eventually returned to Rome for a while.[63] Jerome also spent time in Antioch and Constantinople, eventually settling in Palestine. Pelagius may represent some of the broadest travels: hailing from Britain, he made his way to Rome (possibly for his education). The Gothic invasion sent him to Carthage, where he caught the attention of Augustine, then to Jerusalem, where he continued to ignite the ire of Jerome; he later was exiled, likely to Egypt.[64] The Latin fathers in particular also crossed linguistic borders as well as geographical ones, since scholars such as Ambrose, Jerome, Rufinus, and Hilary disseminated Greek learning throughout the West by their translations and use of Greek scholarship, making the textual influence available to them even more cosmopolitan.[65]

These broad travels are but a few examples of how challenging it may be to identify by city or region a variant attested by a particular father. For instance, when Jerome tells the story about once hearing a sermon based on a textual variant in **Eph 5:14** (§153), how do we know exactly where Jerome was when he heard the sermon? Unless evidence from another source can be used to narrow the range of possible locations, we

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[62] P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 1-2, 72-73.

[63] For example, see G. Fedalto, *Rufino di Concordia: Tra Oriente e Occidente* (Rome: Città Nuova, 1990), whose chapters are organized by geography (Concordia and Aquileia, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine, the East, Aquileia and Rome). Similarly, Kelly, *Jerome*, has several chapters with a location in the title: Rome, Trier and Aquileia, Antioch, Constantinople, Bethlehem.

[64] B. R. Rees, *Pelagius: A Reluctant Heretic* (Suffolk, UK: Boydell, 1988), xii-xiv, 1-2.

[65] Ramsey, *Ambrose*, 54. Eastern fathers such as Theodoret also had facility in Syriac, but that apparently influenced scholarship on the OT text more than the NT, in terms of discussing variants (R. C. Hill, *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch* [Bible in Ancient Christianity 5; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005], 64-73).

can only limit it based on where Jerome had traveled to that point in his life, and by language (since he explains the Greek variant rather than the Latin). In other words, lining up patristic evidence based on geography is anything but simple. The bottom line with all of these variables is that while it is not always impossible to pinpoint the discussion of a father, and therefore the variants attested, by time and place, it is often difficult to do so with certainty. Even when a discussion can be dated and located, there is no guarantee of the exact source the father is referencing when mentioning "some copies" or merely a variant without any comment on the external evidence. Such testimony, relating to time and place, is most secure if it corroborates, or is corroborated by, the extant MS evidence.

One other aspect that should be mentioned, at least briefly, is the relationship between NT text types and the variants the fathers may attest in particular locations. Origen, again, stands as a primary example and figure of interest. Since he was trained in Alexandrian scholarship and worked extensively on the text of the OT, one question is whether he had a hand in developing what subsequently became the Alexandrian text type (see further Chap. 1). Since the Caesarean text is a derivative of this, it also raises the question of whether he had an equal impact on the text in Caesarea.[66] It is therefore particularly of interest to examine the variants attested by Origen, as well as other church

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[66] On Origen's relationship to the Alexandrian and Caesarean texts (primarily for the Pauline epistles), see G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the* Corpus Paulinum (London: British Academy, 1953), and on the question of an Alexandrian recension, see G. D. Fee, "P^{75}, P^{66}, and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria," in *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (ed. R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney; Grand Rapids, MA: Zondervan, 1974), 19-45. Zuntz determines that while the Alexandrian text type reveals careful scholarship, it is likely due to "unknown early critics," not Origen (*Text of the Epistles*, 214-15, 251-52, 272-73), and he makes the distinction that what emerged from Alexandria was "a type of text" rather than "a definite edition" (271-72). Fee likewise determines that there was no "scholarly recension of the NT text in Alexandria either in the fourth century *or* the second century, either as a created or a carefully edited text" and that Origen "showed no concern for such a recension" ("P^{75}, P^{66}, and Origen," 44).

fathers, to see what information this may provide about what text types they knew or used. When the quotations of the fathers are examined as evidence for the text type they are using, it is true that explicit mentions of variants can provide more concrete information about which variants they actually knew (as opposed to implying a reading through a paraphrase or faulty quotation).[67] But once the caveats described in this chapter are taken into account, the actual concrete data is much more limited than the list of references to variants. Thus, such data may be of value, but as little more than corroborating evidence with the results of a broader study.

2.5. Summary

While these limitations must be taken into account when trying to establish the exact date and location of the discussion of a variant, these qualifications do not mean that the list of references to variants cannot serve the purpose intended by Nestle and Metzger. However, to use these citations for reinforcement of the MS evidence or to argue for text types, one must proceed with great care. Yet even when the explicit references to variants are not the most helpful in locating variants by time and place, or in providing a more stable foundation regarding which variants were available to a particular father, such references still have great value in other areas.

In a negative sense, the limitations brought to light by this evidence may in some ways cast further doubt upon scriptural quotations by the fathers and their use as witnesses to variants. It is already clear that a quotation may be affected by memory or paraphrase, but it now must also be considered that certain elements of borrowing or

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[67] See the discussion of the use of patristic material in NT text criticism, and its limitations, in section 1, above.

tradition, or even orality, may come into play.[68] If a father appears to quote a particular variant, is it because he is actually aware of MSS with that reading, or because he has simply heard (or misheard) that variant read in a church on one of his travels or he read it in one of Origen's commentaries? While this may further limit the application of some patristic citations as text-critical evidence, it is useful in the sense of helping to fine-tune the data.

In a more positive sense, the multiple discussions by authors such as Origen and Jerome (along with more limited offerings by the likes of Epiphanius, Eusebius, and Augustine) can offer insight into the textual diversity acknowledged during specific periods. Further, the traditions surrounding certain variants can be traced through the centuries to determine which texts remained in dispute or which variants continued to merit mention. Beyond this, the data can also make a significant contribution to the study of the history of the text and the analytical and exegetical practices of the church fathers. Such uses of this material will be explored throughout this study, particularly in Chapters 5 and 6.

3. The Goals and Structure of This Study

The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, is to provide a catalogue of explicit references to variants along with an analysis of that data to make initial observations

[68] See, for example, Fee, "Use of the Greek Fathers," 191-92, who lists four basic issues when evaluating the Scripture citations of the fathers: (1) whether the quotation is copied directly from a MS or cited from memory; (2) the citation habits of that father (whether strict or free); (3) the character of type of work in which the quotation occurs; (4) the number of Bibles used by the father. This last point especially takes into account the issues raised in this chapter. However, to Fee's list we could also add at least a fifth point: whether the father is quoting the text as he heard or received it from someone else (although it has not been discussed here, this may also include liturgical usage).

about the practice of textual criticism (or lack thereof)[69] among the Greek and Latin fathers up to the time of the first major uncial MSS.[70] The analysis of these explicit references contributes to an under-investigated area of text-critical studies by discussing the textual scholarship of the church fathers and comparing it to modern text-critical practices. This information can provide insight into not only the quality of MSS preferred by these authors but also the textual decisions that were foundational to their exegesis, teaching, and theological debates. While this evaluation will be of primary interest to text critics, it may also shed light upon the function of textual scholarship within the broader biblical scholarship of the fathers and thus contribute to future studies on patristic exegesis.

This dissertation is divided into two parts: data and analysis. The analysis is placed first, comprising Volume I. Chapter 1 explores the most immediate context for the discussion of NT variants, namely, textual scholarship in antiquity; of primary interest are the role of textual evaluation within classical and religious scholarship, and patristic application of textual scholarship to the OT. In addition, the terminology for textual

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[69] In order to withhold judgment on whether or not the fathers were engaging in "textual criticism," I have opted to use phrases like "textual analysis" and "textual scholarship" throughout this study to refer to their evaluations of the text. This phraseology is no more from antiquity than is "textual criticism." The terminology used before and during the time of the early church fathers is considered in Chapter 1, and then Chapter 6 returns to the question of whether or not we can say that the fathers were actually participating in textual criticism.

[70] While the Syriac authors should be included to make the Catalogue truly comprehensive, the more limited resources for the Syriac fathers (compared to searchable databases for Greek and Latin writings, such as Thesaurus Linguae Graecae or Patrologia Latina) make this a much larger project than can be attempted within the scope of this dissertation, and much of the pertinent Syriac writings likely come from a later period than the early centuries under discussion here (Ephrem and Aphrahat being the most notable exceptions, along with any possible contributions from Tatian's Diatesseron). The terminus ad quem for the analysis in Volume I is roughly the 5th cent., through the time of Augustine, although later works are sometimes included when they contribute significantly to the discussion.

study will be examined in Chapter 1 to lay a foundation for comparison with modern notions of textual criticism (to be considered fully in Chap. 6).

The chapters that follow examine the data of explicit references to variants from a number of angles, comparing them for purposes of distinguishing patterns and for use in subsequent scholarship. Chapters 2 (Greek) and 3 (Latin) analyze the data chronologically by author, while Chapter 4 examines the variants most commonly discussed among the fathers. These chapters often cover the same territory, only from different perspectives to elicit a different type of results; thus, their value is more as a reference tool than an engaging narrative. The texts under discussion are all included in the Catalogue or Additional Texts (in Volume II) and therefore, for the sake of space, are not explained or quoted again in detail with each new mention. For ease of cross-reference, two methods are used in these chapters to help direct the reader to the text in question: verses that appear in the Catalogue are listed in bold (e.g., **Rom 12:13**), and the paragraph numbers after names or verses correspond to the Catalogue numbering (e.g., §117).

Based on these considerations of specific examples, Chapter 5 draws back to again consider the larger picture, exploring the role of exegesis and apologetics in the patristic discussions of variant readings, and summarizing the criteria applied in the evaluation of those variants. Chapter 6 returns to the issues posed here in the General Introduction and in Chapter 1 to address how the textual scholarship of the fathers compares to the standards of modern textual criticism and what we can learn from them. The Conclusion summarizes the contribution this material makes to our use of patristic

data in NT textual criticism, as well as presenting incidental findings highlighted by this study and suggesting avenues for further research.

In Volume II, the data is presented, starting with an Introduction to provide background on the materials used in the Catalogue, their complexity, and the format for the catalogue of explicit references. The Catalogue follows, along with Additional Texts, which do not technically qualify as explicit references to variants but are valuable to the discussion of variants and textual analysis by the church fathers. The Appendixes that conclude the study present a comparative list of Nestle's and Metzger's data against what is included in the Catalogue and Additional Texts (Appendix A), a separate treatment of Bede's study of Acts (Appendix B), and a list of all the fathers included in the study with basic background and bibliography (Appendix C). The Bibliography incorporates only those works used throughout the dissertation (including critical texts and translations), not additional recommended reading.

CHAPTER 1

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS IN ANTIQUITY AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

Beyond the historical and social circumstances that affected the church fathers who discussed NT variants and their works, as explored in the General Introduction, another important background for understanding patristic examinations of variants is what type of textual scholarship was in use in antiquity, and to what extent the fathers were trained in this scholarship and applied it to scriptural texts. This chapter will address such issues to lay the foundation for the detailed analysis of textual scholarship on the NT in subsequent chapters.

By the time that the NT writings were composed and the process of reproduction and transmission began, the study and comparison of texts was already well known to the Greeks, Latins, and Jews. The early Christians inherited and adapted their understanding of textual study from these previous traditions, most notably the study of Homer and other classics in Alexandria and Rome, and the study of what the Christians adopted as their OT, in both its Hebrew and Greek traditions. Scholars such as Origen and Jerome were brought up with a classical training, applying textual analysis to the great Greek and Latin literature, but their primary interest as men of the church was to employ these methods for their study of the OT. Therefore, before delving into their treatment of the

NT, it is essential to gain an understanding of the textual traditions that the early Christians received and employed.

1. Classical and Jewish Scholarship

1.1. Homer and The Origins of Classical Textual Scholarship

Centuries before the NT texts were composed, textual analysis was being applied to Greek literature, primarily the Homeric epics. What the NT would become to Christians, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had long been to the Greeks: Homer was an authority on all matters, cultural, scientific, or religious, and so his works were studied, quoted, and proof-texted. Since his words carried weight, it was necessary to transmit them with precision, and thus textual analysis was born.[1]

The main body of poetry that came to be attributed to Homer was composed by the end of the 8th century. Even within the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* themselves, there was a tendency toward self-interpretation, the elucidation of words both for explanation and for playing on words. Originally, Homeric poetry was entirely an oral endeavor, and so those responsible for handing down the "text" were not scribes but rhapsodes, oral performers who thrived during the pre-bookish age of the 6th and 5th centuries. As time progressed and the language and culture became further removed from the era of Homer, it became necessary to explain, or even alter, words and phrases in order to interpret the poetry for the current audience, not unlike the interpretation of Shakespeare for a modern audience. For this purpose, the rhapsodes began to accumulate word lists, etymologies,

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[1] For a more detailed summary of much of the evidence presented throughout this chapter, see J. Van Seters, *The Edited Bible: The Curious History of the "Editor" in Biblical Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 27-112.

and anecdotes about the poet himself. These glosses and elucidations became the forerunners to the detailed textual scholarship that would later flourish in Hellenistic Alexandria.[2]

In the 5th century, with the rise of the Sophists and their emphasis on the book as a tool for training and for preserving literature, the Greeks began to see a shift of emphasis from orality to the written word.[3] By the time of Aristotle, the mere linguistic skill of the Sophists had been transformed into the art of rhetoric and beginning of humanistic scholarship, and books had become numerous enough to be collected into the first libraries. While Aristotle participated in the Homeric scholarship of his day, composing a work on difficulties in the Homeric texts, it is questionable whether he deserves the designation as the father of textual criticism that he often receives.[4] This attribution comes primarily through later references to an "edition" (ἔκδοσις) of Aristotle, which Plutarch calls a corrected copy (διόρθωσις), or recension, referring to a copy of Homer that he is said to have produced for his pupil Alexander.[5] Although corrected copies may

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[2] R. Pfeiffer, *A History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 3-6, 11-12; cf. M. Haslam, "Homeric Papyri and Transmission of the Text," in *A New Companion to Homer* (ed. I. Morris and B. Powell; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1996), 80-82. On the rhapsodes, see B. Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[3] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 16-17, 27. Pfeiffer also notes that this transition to a written culture is attested by the "frequent references to writing and reading in poetry and art from the seventies of the fifth century onwards" (25). Cf. B. M. W. Knox and P. E. Easterling, "Books and Readers in the Greek World," in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, vol. 1, *Greek Literature* (ed. P. E. Easterling and B. M. W. Knox; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 6-16.

[4] For example, see E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), 106. Cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 69-71.

[5] These terms will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. See H. T. Peck, *A History of Classical Philology: from the Seventh Century B.C. to the Twentieth Century A.D.* (New York: Macmillan, 1911), 78-79. While the tradition that Alexander owned such a copy may be reliable, there is no evidence that Aristotle was the editor of this text (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 71-72). There is also a tradition preserved by Cicero (*De or*. 3.137) that a recension of Homer was produced as early as the 6th

have existed during the 4th century or previously,[6] true textual scholarship (διόρθωσις) emerged in Alexandria during the 3rd century in the figure of Zenodotus.

Under the patronage of Ptolemy I, the Museum was instituted in Alexandria, and along with it, the library.[7] Although Demetrius of Phaleron, a student of Aristotle's Peripatetic school in Athens, helped to found the library, it was Zenodotus of Ephesus who was chosen as the first librarian (c. 285 B.C.E.).[8] With Zenodotus emerged a new era in Homeric scholarship. The abundant resources gathered at the Alexandrian library provided a unique opportunity for scholars to have a number of MSS available for their comparison, and this ease of reference inspired Zenodotus and his successors to devote their time to a careful collation of Homeric and other texts. He has thus been referred to

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century, by Peisistratus (c. 530 B.C.E.), but Pfeiffer (*History of Classical Scholarship*, 6, 25) has pointed out that the tradition cannot be traced back prior to the 1st century B.C.E. and is an anachronistic projection of the Ptolemaic age into an earlier era. Cf. Haslam, "Homeric Papyri and Transmission of the Text," 82-83; Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 153-54.

[6] More reliable than the tradition about Aristotle is the attribution of an edition (ἔκδοσις) to Antimachus of Colophon (c. 400 B.C.E.), although Pfeiffer asserts that while he was a biographer and glossator of Homer, he was not a true textual critic (*History of Classical Scholarship*, 72, 93-95, 216 n. 1). Peck also cites a tradition about Lycurgus of Athens commissioning collated editions of several tragic poets c. 350 B.C.E. (Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 78-79; cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 82).

[7] The Museum was a scholarly community headed by a priest and devoted to the service of the Muses; although there was Athenian influence, this was not a community of philosophers but of humanists and scientists (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 96-99). While the Museum began under Ptolemy I, the library was primarily built during the reign of his son, Ptolemy II. On the Ptolemies and Alexandria, see Knox and Easterling, "Books and Readers in the Greek World," 1:29-31.

[8] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 99-102, 105, 107. Peck attributes to Demetrius six books on Homer "supposed to have dealt with text criticism" (*History of Classical Philology*, 91); he is also a key figure in the translation of the LXX, according to the *Letter of Aristeas* (see below). See also J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship: from the Sixth Century B.C. to the End of the Middle Ages*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 114.

as the first διορθωτής, or textual critic, engaged in the careful correction of texts, and his edition of Homer is often referred to as the first scientific or critical edition.[9]

Zenodotus's edition (ἔκδοσις) of Homer was a personal copy emended with his own notations and comments over the years and deposited in the library as a resource for other scholars.[10] It is likely that Zenodotus produced a diplomatic text, selecting what he deemed the best MS among those available to him and adding his corrections based on both internal and external evidence.[11] Zenodotus's διόρθωσις contributed a variety of changes to the text: deletion, or marking for deletion (omitting spurious lines); query (marking lines as doubtful); transposition (rearranging the order of lines); and emendation (substituting new readings for old).[12] Zenodotus particularly gained a reputation for his conjectural emendations, which were based upon literary criticism, and has often been criticized for lacking consistent methodology.[13] He pioneered the use of critical signs by introducing the obelus, used in the margin to indicate dubious lines,

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[9] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 105; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 94, 106. Cf. Knox and Easterling, "Books and Readers in the Greek World," 1:31-33.

[10] Franco Montanari, "Zenodotus, Aristarchus, and the *Ekdosis* of Homer," in *Editing Texts* (ed. G. W. Most; Aporemata 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 8.

[11] Pfeiffer summarizes the evidence for the state of the textual tradition during the 3rd century, noting the variety present in the quotations and papyri, concluding that "we can appreciate Zenodotus' problem when we realize that he was confronted with such a great number of more or less differing copies" (*History of Classical Scholarship*, 110).

[12] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 105-6; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 110. Cf. Haslam, "Homeric Papyri and Transmission of the Text," 72-74.

[13] M. Van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 2:78. For example, Apollonius of Rhodes wrote *Against Zenodotus* and often preferred to rely on the older, pre-critical Homeric texts (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 146-47). However, some of Zenodotus's supposed conjectural emendations have since been corroborated by the papyri (ibid., 114).

although he is not known to have produced any commentaries.[14] While later scholars did not always agree with his textual decisions, they did follow in the tradition of his scholarship and developed further many of his practices.

Aristophanes of Byzantium was the next librarian (195-180 B.C.E.) to contribute to the evolution of textual analysis.[15] While Zenodotus had no previous scholarly edition with which to confer, Aristophanes had the edition of Zenodotus at his disposal and was able to analyze previous textual decisions to develop his own edition. Aristophanes was more conservative in his judgments than Zenodotus, reticent to include his own conjectures and preferring to obelize dubious and spurious lines rather than delete them entirely.[16] He also built upon Zenodotus's use of the obelus, expanding the list of critical signs to at least four to indicate other problems, such as tautology and transposition.[17] But perhaps his greatest influence came through his training of Aristarchus.

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[14] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 115: The use of the obelus "should not be regarded just as the introduction of a useful technical device. This was the first time that an editor had provided the serious reader and scholar with an opportunity of appraising his critical judgement. Zenodotus did not suppress the lines of which he doubted the genuineness, but left them in the context, marking them, however on the margin with the obelus; he disclosed his own opinion and enabled the reader to check it." Subsequent scholars followed in this tradition, but even more conservatively, as will become especially apparent in the work of Origen.

[15] Although Callimachus of Cyrene and Apollonius of Rhodes are sometimes counted among the librarians, the only agreed upon intermediate librarian is Eratosthenes of Cyrene (c. 234-195 BC); cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 128, 140-42; Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 98; Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:114-15. But textual analysis was not completely suspended between Zenodotus and Aristophanes; for example, Rhianus of Crete is attributed with creating an edition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, some readings of which are still extant in the scholia (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 148-49).

[16] Montanari, "Zenodotus, Aristarchus, and the *Ekdosis* of Homer," 9; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 173.

[17] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 178; Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:127. Aristophanes' work also extended beyond the Homeric text to lyric and dramatic poetry, where his contributions were even more significant, including his elaboration on the system of breathing and punctuation and his list of "canons" or the best of the classical authors (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 173, 181, 206-7; Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 98-99).

Aristarchus of Samothrace, who succeeded Aristophanes as the next librarian in Alexandria (c. 180-146), is considered the greatest textual scholar of antiquity.[18] In many ways, he built upon the work of Aristophanes so that at times is it difficult to distinguish which of them was responsible for a particular achievement.[19] Like his mentor, Aristarchus employed a number of sigla to indicate the quality or originality of various readings and his agreement or disagreement with previous editions. With these signs, he continued to represent the same conservative trend, preferring to retain readings and note his disagreement with them rather than entirely omitting them. The system of critical signs that Aristarchus established consisted of six marginal symbols: an obelus for spurious readings; a diplé for notable language; a dotted diplé for readings where Aristarchus diverged from the text of Zenodotus; an asterisk for verses incorrectly repeated elsewhere; a stigmé, or dot, for possibly spurious readings; and an antisigma for incorrect order of lines.[20] These symbols represented textual judgments based on a number of both internal and external criteria.

While Aristophanes and Aristarchus are also accused of including personal conjectures, they often rejected Zenodotus's readings based on an appeal to the MS tradition. The Alexandrian scholars typically judged editions (ἐκδόσεις) by their person (αἱ κατ᾽ ἄνδρα) or city (αἱ κατὰ πόλεις) of origin, preferring these copies to the

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[18] Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:114.

[19] P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, vol. 1: *Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 462. It is even sometimes questioned whether Aristarchus made his own critical edition of Homer or simply relied on the edition of Aristophanes. One likely explanation is that Aristarchus began writing commentaries based on Aristophanes' text, then subsequently made his own corrected edition and revised his commentaries based on his own critical work (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 217; Montanari, "Zenodotus, Aristarchus, and the *Ekdosis* of Homer," 10ff.).

[20] Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:132; Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 113; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 218.

koinē texts, which they regarded as more careless and less accurate.[21] But Aristarchus and his predecessors also applied a knowledge of literary conventions, paying careful attention to the style and vocabulary of each author in order to determine the reading that seemed most appropriate. E. G. Turner lists a number of subjective, literary criteria that they used: not true to life, improbable, morally harmful, verbally contradictory, contrary to the art of poetry, or unbecoming; as well as more objective criteria based on historical, geographical, and linguistic concerns.[22] Whether or not Aristarchus coined the phrase "to interpret Homer by means of Homer" (Ὅμηρον ἐξ ῾ομήρου σαφηνίζειν), it was a hermeneutic that he frequently employed.[23] In this way, the notion of an original text consisted in the author's intended wording or sense; if a reading was determined to be inappropriate or unworthy of the author, then it had no place in that author's authentic text.

Aristarchus further expanded on the work of previous scholars by using the critical signs in the text as a notation system that corresponded to his detailed

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[21] Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:133-34. Although the persons associated with these editions have traditionally been understood as their editors or textual critics, they may simply have been the original owners from whom copies were made (cf. B. A. van Groningen, "ΕΚΔΟΣΙΣ," *Mnemosyne* 16 [1963]: 12-17). See also G. Nagy, "Homeric Scholia," in Morris and Powell, *New Companion to Homer*, 119-21.

[22] Turner, *Greek Papyri*, 110; M. H. A. L. H. Van der Valk, *Textual Criticism of the Odyssey* (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff's Uitgeversmaatschappij N. V., 1949), 115.

[23] Porphyry attests the earliest extant use of this phrase in his *Homeric Questions* (J. F. Procopé, "Greek Philosophy, Hermeneutics and Alexandrian Understanding of the Old Testament," in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, vol. I/1, *Antiquity* [ed. M. Saebø; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996] , 474-76, esp. n. 192); cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 225-27. Bernhard Neuschäfer (*Origenes als Philologe*, vol. 1: *Text* [2 vols.; Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 18/1-2; Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt, 1987], 276-85) also notes how Origen applied a similar principle to Scripture, as we shall see below.

commentaries (ὑπομνήματα), which both analyzed and interpreted the text.[24] This innovation represented an important shift that would affect all subsequent scholarship in Alexandria. Creating an edition was seen not merely as an end in itself but a means to further study and interpretation; it was a personal exercise to prepare for the real task of commentary, since it is necessary to know the text before expounding upon it. Therefore, Aristarchus is described as following a pattern that consisted of first arranging the text, then determining the accents, determining the forms, explaining the words, and finally engaging in criticism (κρίσις), which found ultimate fruition in his commentaries.[25] With Aristarchus, Alexandrian textual analysis thus achieved its peak; subsequent scholars, such as Didymus Chalcenteros (c. 65 BC-c. 10 AD), were content to rely on the text established by Aristarchus and move forward with other aspects of grammatical criticism.[26]

While the achievements at Alexandria certainly had the most lasting effect upon the textual history of the Greek classics and the greatest influence upon Origen and his successors, it was certainly not the only location in the Mediterranean where scholarship thrived. During Aristarchus's tenure as librarian, Pergamum was emerging as a rival

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[24] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 218; Montanari, "Zenodotus, Aristarchus, and the *Ekdosis* of Homer," 10.

[25] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 110. Pfeiffer offers a similar, although slightly different, description (*History of Classical Scholarship*, 268-69). This system, simplified into the four steps of διόρθωσις, ἀνάγνωσις, ἐξήγησις, κρίσις (textual criticism, reading, interpretation, and criticism) was still standard in Origen's day and would have been part of his grammatical studies (J. W. Trigg, *Origen* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 5-7; cf. H.-I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* [Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1965], 250-51).

[26] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 104, 115. Indeed, Van der Valk assesses that Didymus and his contemporaries no longer properly understood the process of textual analysis, accepting readings rather uncritically based only upon their origin with a particular scholar (*Textual Criticism of the Odyssey*, 29).

center of learning, led especially by Crates of Mallos. He was also a scholar of the text and at times supported the readings of Zenodotus over Aristarchus.[27] During an extended visit to Rome (c. 168 B.C.E.), Crates delivered a number of lectures, which served to ignite literary study and textual analysis among the Latins.[28] Alexandrian scholarship also found its way to Rome, but through the 1st century B.C.E., textual analysis was practiced in Rome only to a very limited degree.[29] At the same time, literary study and grammar thrived, inspiring the Romans to establish their own library on the model of those at Alexandria and Pergamum and to shape their education on a Greek model. During the 1st century C.E., textual analysis finally found a lasting home in Rome with the arrival of the Syrian Valerius Probus, who applied critical signs to Virgil and Horace much as Aristarchus had done with Homer. During the same century, Quintilian formulated a system of education, beginning with grammar and comprehensive study of the humanities and sciences, all as a foundation for the supreme art of oratory. Quintilian's work was so influential that while there was no dearth of grammarians in the

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[27] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 45-46. It is unclear whether Crates produced his own edition of Homer, but some of his readings are preserved in the scholia (Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:156-57).

[28] Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1:159; J. E. G. Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism in Antiquity* (Salem, NH: The Ayer Co., 1984), 11.

[29] Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism*, 11, 26; cf. E. J. Kenney, "Books and Readers in the Roman World," in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, vol. 2, *Latin Literature* (ed. E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 27-30. Due to the influence of Crates, textual scholarship in Rome was an interesting blend of Aristarchian signs and the anomalist grammar that Crates taught (in contrast to the Alexandrian method of categorizing words by analogy). However, the Romans did not wholeheartedly subscribe to the principle of anomaly, invigorating much scholarly debate on analogy versus anomaly—in a sense, continuing the debate between Alexandria and Pergamum (Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1: 156-57, 179-81; Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 120).

ensuing centuries, little original scholarship was done in the field of grammar until the time of Aelius Donatus, teacher of Jerome.[30]

1.2. The Hebrew Bible and the Road to the Masoretic Text

While the Greeks were busy preserving and discussing Homer, the texts that would become the Hebrew Bible were undergoing their own formation. Those responsible for handing down the writings of the law and the prophets were the *sopherim*, the scribes. Traditionally, this group was seen to be active from the Persian period onward, beginning with Ezra, editing and reproducing the text to eventually bring it into a standard form by the end of the 1st century C.E.; in this sense, they were the precursors of the Masoretes.[31] The *sopherim* were initially just copyists, those skilled in writing who were primarily employed to draw up legal documents and letters. This required the scribe to acquire secondary skills related to legal terminology and interpretation, leading this class to eventually come to replace the priests as the legal authorities.[32] However, the scribes should not be confused with the rabbis;[33] likewise, whatever standardizing of

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[30] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 161, 171-72, 184-86; J. E. G. Zetzel, "Religion, Rhetoric, and Editorial Technique: Reconstructing the Classics," in *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities* (ed. G. Bornstein and R. G. Williams; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 108.

[31] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 60; cf. R. Gordis, *The Biblical Text in the Making: A Study of the Kethib-Qere* (1937; new ed. New York: Ktav, 1971), xi-liii. The data for these details is not copious, though, and the interpretation is disputed.

[32] E. J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 162-63.

[33] Bickerman states, "It would be a rather amusing metonymy if the rabbis, who discouraged their students from writing down their opinions, had styled themselves 'writers.'" He traces this erroneous identification back to Luther, based on a mistranslation of γραμματεῖς as scholars (γραμματικοί, a term applied to the Alexandrians) rather than copyists or scribes (*Jews in the Greek Age*, 163).

the text that is attributed to the rabbis should not be confused with the work of the *sopherim*.

Whether or not it was the work of an official class of *sopherim*, evidence of scribal activity during the final centuries before the Common Era can be found among the scrolls of Qumran.[34] The variety of literary editions[35] and individual variant readings attested in this collection illustrate the creative work of those responsible for their copying and preservation. While the scribes were interested in copying the text verbatim, they also acted as interpreters of the texts, sometimes inserting new material to make the text relevant for their own generation.[36] The broad pluriformity of text types is in direct contrast to the cache of MSS from a few centuries later found at Muraba‘at. The great uniformity of these texts and their agreement with what would be known as the Masoretic Text has led most scholars to assume that in the intervening centuries (two centuries C.E. and the period surrounding the Jewish revolts), the text had become stabilized, even

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[34] From around the same period (which he terms “pre-masoretic”), M. J. Mulder also notes a list of “scribal emendations” attributed to the *sopherim* by later Alexandrians and rabbis, along with other markings that may have been early “critical notes” on the text (“The Transmission of the Biblical Text,” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* [ed. M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling; Assen: Van Gorcum/Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988], 92-94).

[35] Although Eugene Ulrich uses the term “variant literary editions” (for example, “Multiple Literary Editions: Reflections Toward a Theory of the History of the Biblical Text,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans/Cambridge: Brill, 1999], 99-120), this use of “editions” should not be confused here with the ἐκδόσεις of the Alexandrians.

[36] “Sometimes the scribes intentionally inserted new material that helped interpret or highlight for their contemporary congregation in a new situation the relevance of the traditional text. These creative biblical scribes were actively handing on the tradition, but they were adding to it, enriching it, and attempting to make it adaptable and relevant” (E. Ulrich, “The Community of Israel and the Composition of the Scriptures,” in *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, 11). Because of this, S. Talmon has even come to reclassify some textual variants as “biblical stylistics” (“The Textual Study of the Bible—A New Outlook,” in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (ed. F. M. Cross and S. Talmon; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 321-400. Cf. M. Fishbane’s description of some scribal activity as “inner-biblical exegesis” (*Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1985]).

standardized.[37] The questions that remain are how this came to be, who was responsible, and whether it was a result of conscious editorial or text-critical activity.

As Bertil Albrektson describes it, "The rabbis are often pictured as having constituted a kind of editorial committee, carefully selecting variants from different manuscripts and fixing an authoritative text, which was to serve as the official norm."[38] This portrait is based on rabbinic evidence and the assumption of Alexandrian influence. The rabbinic tradition most commonly adduced relates the story of three scrolls which were found in the temple court and compared on a number of readings, with the reading of two scrolls taking precedence over the reading of merely one.[39] But a number of cautions must be voiced about using this as testimony to the practice of the 1st century, not least of all the layers of later traditions that the story has likely accumulated. It is also not clear that the original account was discussing biblical MSS.[40] On the other hand, while the rabbinic literature does not record scholarly discussions about variant readings

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[37] Bertil Albrektson dissents from this position and cautions that a single find of MSS merely attests to the text in use by that community at that time, not to the state of the text in all places during the same time period. However, even he admits that the fact remains, the text did become stabilized at some point during the first few centuries of the Common Era ("Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text of the Hebrew Bible," in *Congress Volume: Göttingen, 1977* (VTSup 29; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 58, 62-64.

[38] Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 49 (see 49 n. 2 for a list of scholars who hold this view).

[39] Saul Lieberman claims that this is evidence of the rabbis collating an eclectic text (*Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the I Century B.C.E.-IV Century C.E.* [2nd ed.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1962], 21-22). Harry Orlinsky uses this as evidence for something slightly later, namely a method that the Masoretes used to determine the Kethib-Qere readings ("The Origin of the *Kethib-Qere* System: A New Approach," in *Congress Volume: Oxford, 1959* [VTSup 7; Leiden: Brill, 1960], 189-90). In either case, if such a process was ever used, it testifies to an interesting "critical" method of choosing a reading based on the majority of MSS, although it should also be noted that the location of these texts in the temple automatically ascribes to them a certain quality, so that it is the majority of not just any MSS available but the best.

[40] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 65-66; Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 56. The tradition is preserved in four rabbinic texts, all late, although the story is said to go back to Rabbi Simeon b. Lakish in the 3rd century.

or proposed emendations,[41] the rabbis did comment on scribal practices, notably the correction of new copies against a reliable exemplar. In some accounts, the exemplar is referred to as a copy of the Torah housed in the temple, leading scholars to cite this as testimony to an authoritative edition used to promulgate a standardized text.[42] All that these accounts truly prove, though, is that careful copying was highly valued, a trait exemplified by the Masoretes.

Likewise, there is little to no evidence of Alexandrian textual analysis influencing rabbinic scholarship.[43] While it is true that there was Hellenistic influence in Second Temple Judaism, and there were strong Jewish ties with Alexandrian intellectualism (especially through Aristobulus and Philo), the careful textual analysis familiar from the Homeric and classical texts did not leave its mark in Jewish scholarship.[44] The textual judgments and corresponding commentaries characteristic of Aristarchus have no

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[41] Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 53; he also makes the interesting point that rather than finding variants in the text to be an obstacle needing correction, the rabbis rather embraced these differences as an opportunity for exegesis, even creating new readings at times for this very purpose (61). While Origen was not in the habit of creating new readings, his tendency to exegete all available variants shows some similarity to, and may even be influenced by, this rabbinic practice.

[42] For example, *b. Keth.* 106a; *y. Sanh*. II 6; and Gordis, *Biblical Text in the Making*, xxvi. Against this view, see Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 70-72; Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 56-57. As Van Seters points out, this may well be a later practice projected back into an earlier period; like the city editions referred to by the Alexandrians, the Jews may have housed MSS at key locations which were seen as reliable exemplars, which "may have been a factor in the gradual development of increasing uniformity of the Hebrew vulgate" (*Edited Bible*, 72). Yet this offers no evidence as to the text type of the exemplar or its source.

[43] Lieberman is one proponent of such influence, arguing that the *sopherim*, like the Alexandrians, emended the text and used critical signs to establish the most authentic text (*Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 20-21). The majority of the examples that Lieberman cites, especially the critical signs, relate to copying practices (e.g. dots above the letters used to mark those characters for deletion), which were not isolated to merely the Alexandrians and the Jews. See Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 79-80; Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 52. As Albrektson points out, Lieberman himself finally arrives at a similar conclusion: "the textual corrections of Greek classics practiced by the Alexandrian grammarians have no parallels in the rabbinic exegesis of Scripture" (*Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 47). What Lieberman's evidence does show, though, is Alexandrian influence in rabbinic interpretation.

[44] Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 50-52.

corollary in Second Temple Judaism or the early rabbinic period; the earliest comparison would be found among the Masoretes.[45] In fact, the Masoretic Text, the very text that was supposedly produced by this critical process, shows little evidence of such recensional activity.[46] Eugene Ulrich thus concludes that prior to the Second Revolt, "There seems to be no evidence that texts were compared for text-critical purposes to select a single text that would become standard."[47]

If the *sopherim* or rabbis were not involved in detailed textual analysis, how then did a stabilized text come into being? The most plausible explanation may be that it was merely an accident (or result) of history. Ulrich notes two main factors in the pluriformity of the text coming to an end around the first half of the 2nd century C.E.: (1) the Roman threat to the continuity of Jewish life and practices, and (2) the growing tension between Jews and Christians.[48] Albrektson describes the circumstances of the period in slightly different terms, pointing out that the Pharisees emerged as the dominant group after the revolts, and so the text form they used naturally became dominant as well.[49] It is possible that the selection was a matter of intentionality rather than merely

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[45] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 81. It should also be noted that even among the signs used by Aristarchus, not all of them related to textual decisions; some were merely notations to point the reader to the correct location in his commentary (see above and Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism*, 15-16).

[46] The problems and inconsistencies in the text lead F. M. Cross ("The Contribution of Qumrân Discoveries to the Study of the Biblical Text," *IEJ* 16 [1966]: 94) to conclude that the principles guiding the recension were "unusual"—Albrektson deduces this to mean that there were, in fact, no principles put into practice ("Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 59-60). Albrektson concludes that "what Cross describes is in fact a text which has not been subject to recensional and text-critical activities" (60).

[47] Ulrich, "Community of Israel," 15. What Ulrich asserts was *not* happening (but is, in fact, exactly what Cross describes for each major division of the Hebrew Bible) was the selection of a particular text type as the basis for a diplomatic edition ("Contribution of Qumrân Discoveries," 94).

[48] Ulrich, "Community of Israel," 12.

[49] Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 62-63.

accident, but if so, the rabbis left no discussion of the process or criteria.[50] Either way, by the end of the 2nd century C.E., the text of the Hebrew Bible bore a unity not attested at Qumran, such that translators and revisers of the Greek Scriptures, both Jewish and Christian, came to view the Hebrew text as monolithic and unchanging, not requiring commentary like the divergent readings known in the Greek copies. This unified text came to be treated with great scholarly care by the Masoretes and thus came to bear their name.[51]

1.3. Greek Translations and Revisions of the Jewish Scriptures

While the pluriformity of the Jewish Scriptures was still flourishing in and around Qumran, and Alexandrian scholarship was still coming into its own, the Torah and other Hebrew texts were translated into Greek, likely in Alexandria itself. It is this Greek translation, the Septuagint (LXX), that would become the OT for the church and the foundation for much debate among the fathers over the virtues of the Hebrew versus the Greek text. The *Letter of Aristeas*, today perceived as mostly legendary, is the best resource for retelling the story of this translation and was long influential in the veneration of this version by Christians and Alexandrian Jews.[52] Although most scholars

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[50] Albrektson compares the case for the establishing of the canon, where we do have evidence of such discussions preserved ("Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text," 63).

[51] Although the Masoretes are slightly later and thus not relevant to the time period under discussion here, there remains the interesting question whether or not they were engaged in textual criticism, especially pertaining to the Kethib-Qere system. For further discussion, see Orlinsky, "Origin of the *Kethib-Qere* System"; Gordis, *Biblical Text in the Making*; and the helpful summary by Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 58-63.

[52] According to the story, when Demetrius of Phaleron was acquiring MSS for the new library, under the patronage of Ptolemy II (285-247 B.C.E.), he contacted the high priest in Jerusalem for a copy of the Torah translated into Greek. A delegation including seventy-two translators (representing all twelve tribes) was sent to Alexandria, and they completed the translation in seventy-two days. The translation was

now discount the story as unhistorical, the scholarly environment and needs of the Jewish Diaspora at Alexandria make that a likely place where part or all of the translation occurred.[53] Citations of the Torah in Greek later in the same century (c. 221-205 B.C.E.) also corroborate the date, in the early to mid-3rd century.[54] While the title "Septuagint" came to be applied to a translation of the entire Hebrew Bible and apocrypha, the Prophets and the Writings were likely translated at a later date, during the following two centuries.[55]

The LXX was not the only Greek version of the Jewish Scriptures, nor was it considered the authoritative translation by all Jews. Since the Alexandrian library may have commissioned a copy of the Torah, it is possible that the rival library at Pergamum also desired their own translation. One theory suggests that a version, referred to as Proto-Theodotion, was translated in Asia Minor sometime during the last three centuries before the Common Era; a copy was then housed in the Pergamene library and traveled to Alexandria when Mark Antony gave the library to Cleopatra (c. 42 B.C.E.).[56] Alternatively, this version has been called *Kaige*-Theodotion, associating Proto-

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well received by the local Jewish community, and they requested a copy be made for their own use (see K. H. Jobes and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic/ Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000], 33-34). For an introduction to and translation of the *Letter of Aristeas* (by R. J. H. Shutt), see *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 2:7-34.

[53] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 34.

[54] E. Ulrich, "Origen's Old Testament Text: The Transmission History of the Septuagint to the Third Century C.E.," in *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, 207; Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*, 101.

[55] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 34. Based on quotations and MS evidence, Ulrich determines that "the Former Prophets were translated before the middle of the second century B.C.E. and probably by ca. 200 because they would have been translated prior to Chronicles, which was circulating by the mid-second century B.C.E. The Latter Prophets would very likely have been translated at the same time as the Former Prophets, and of the Writings many books would very likely have been translated about the same time as Chronicles" ("Origen's Old Testament Text," 208-9).

[56] S. Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 90-91.

Theodotion with the family of MSS identified by their tendency to translate the Hebrew *we-gam* with καίγε. Scholars are not agreed upon whether this family of texts should be considered a separate translation or merely a revision of the LXX more in line with the Hebrew.[57] Whatever the exact terminology or relationship between these MSS, quotations from this non-LXX version have been identified in the NT and some early Christian writers, testifying to its wide use alongside the LXX.[58] This is the version that Theodotion later revised, and possibly Aquila and Symmachus as well.[59]

During this era before the stabilization of the Hebrew text, the Greek translations continued to evolve, contributing to the pluriformity of the text. As a more unified Hebrew text began to emerge, especially during the first two centuries C.E., there was an increased awareness of the problems in the LXX and it divergences from the Hebrew.[60] The 2nd century C.E. was particularly a fruitful time for Jewish revisions of the Greek text. Aquila seems to have been the first, and perhaps most influential, to have

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[57] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 42, 284-86. On the *Kaige*, see especially D. Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaprophéton* (VTSup 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963); and the summary in S. Jellicoe, "Some Reflections on the Καίγε Recension," *VT* 23 (1973): 15-24. In his study on Job, Peter Gentry concludes: "There is no *Kaige* Recension as such. Instead, there is a continuum from the Greek Pentateuch to Aquila in which approaches and attitudes to translation are on the whole tending toward a closer alignment between the Greek and the Hebrew. Moreover, there is a tradition which developed within this continuum and involved the interplay between various forces in Judaism. To this tradition the καίγε texts belong. We have yet to demarcate clearly between this tradition and the LXX" (*The Asterisked Materials in the Greek Job* [SBLSCS 38; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995], 497).

[58] Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 91.

[59] Ulrich, "Origen's Old Testament Text," 213.

[60] As we shall see further below, both Jews and Christians had a simplistic notion of the Hebrew, viewing it as an established text form rather than a tradition with its own set of variants. This may be due either to the proto-Masoretic text already having gained dominance, or simply an ignorance of the diversity among Hebrew MSS. Jellicoe (*Septuagint and Modern Study*, 76) prefers the former explanation.

undertaken one of these revisions.[61] His version is known for being a slavishly literal rendering of the Hebrew, countering the interpretative freedom of the LXX.[62] This literalness earned the respect of the Jews and the disdain of Christians like Irenaeus and Epiphanius, although Origen and Jerome saw its great value in aiding the Christian to understand aspects of the Hebrew.[63]

Such a literal rendering, however, was not readily embraced by all Jews, leading Symmachus to attempt his own revision of the Greek with the goal of being more true to the nuances of the Greek language.[64] Symmachus's revision shows a good understanding of both Hebrew and Greek, achieving a middle ground between the free renderings of the

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[61] According to tradition, Aquila was a Gentile from Pontus in Asia Minor who came to Jerusalem in 128 C.E. as part of Hadrian's rebuilding project. There, he became first a Christian, then a Jewish proselyte, and eventually undertook a revision of the Greek Scriptures against the Hebrew text (see H. B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* [1902; repr. New York: Ktav, 1968], 31-32; Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 78; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 38-40). One point that remains a bit obscured, for Aquila as well as Symmachus after him, is whether he attempted a fresh translation of the Hebrew or revised a previous translation, and if the latter, which translation he was revising. Sebastian Brock points out that until a new find of MSS around the 1950s, scholars had wrongly assumed that Aquila made a new translation; we now know that the fathers were justified in referring to Aquila's version as an ἔκδοσις ("The Phenomenon of Biblical Translation in Antiquity," in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations* [ed. S. Jellicoe; New York: Ktav, 1974], 560). Aquila, like Origen, seemed primarily interested in providing a corrective to the LXX; but the base text that Aquila (and Symmachus) revised may have been a rival Old Greek tradition: the *Kaige* or Proto-Theodotion (Ulrich, "Origen's Old Testament Text," 213; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 42).

[62] Based on this literalness, Jellicoe makes the claim: "The version can never have been intended for popular circulation. It was essentially a teacher's book, aimed at giving an exact rendering of the Hebrew and usable only by one who already understood that language, and its function was interpretative rather than literary" (*Septuagint and Modern Study*, 77). In spite of this, Aquila's version became widely used in the synagogues. This may present an interesting parallel to Origen's Hexapla, which was intended as a scholarly reference work but was disseminated by his successors as a separate recension (see below).

[63] Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 77, 80.

[64] Symmachus was either an Ebionite Christian or a Jewish proselyte who completed his version late in the 2nd century C.E. (Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 49-50; Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 95-96; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 40; see also the detailed study A. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch* [Journal of Semitic Studies Monograph 15; Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1991]).

LXX and the literalness of Aquila, whose version he likely had in front of him.[65] Likewise, during the same century, Theodotion set about revising a form of the Old Greek that existed alongside the LXX and—based on Theodotion's revision—came to be known as the Proto-Theodotion.[66] His version, like Symmachus's, was not as literal as Aquila's, although he preferred to transliterate rather than translate names and often conformed the content and syntax to match the Hebrew text in front of him.[67] Most notably, Theodotion's revision of Daniel was accepted into the churches in place of the defective LXX text.[68] By the time of the Hexapla a century later, at least three other Greek versions were known to Origen for select books of the Bible, testifying to the ongoing and widespread effort of improving the Greek Scriptures for use in the synagogue and in counterpoint to the LXX, which had become embraced by the church.[69]

1.4. Summary and Discussion of Terminology

It is against this background that the earliest Christians began their study of the emerging NT text. Before evaluating the work done by the church fathers, it is necessary first to evaluate precisely what type of previous scholarship was being done on secular and religious texts. Amidst the comparing and critiquing of MSS and translations, were

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[65] Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 49-50; Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 98; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 41.

[66] Traditionally, Theodotion was a Jewish proselyte (although, Jerome refers to him as an Ebionite) from Ephesus (Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 42-43; Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 83-84; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 41).

[67] Ulrich, "Origen's Old Testament Text," 213; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 41.

[68] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 41.

[69] Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 55; Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 118-21; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 50.

the Alexandrians or the Jews producing "critical editions"? What did their editions look like, and what purpose did they serve? What type of work were they doing on the text, and to what end? In fact, were they engaging in textual criticism?

The primary term used to describe Alexandrian textual correction was διόρθωσις, a noun that could designate either the corrected edition or the practice of producing such an edition.[70] Zenodotus was referred to as the first διορθωτής, a term also applied to a number of the librarians who followed him.[71] The notion was to set the text straight, or to establish a reliable text as the basis for further literary study. This task was not the province of only the elite scholar but the basic starting point for any student of literature. The result of the correction process was a personal edition (ἔκδοσις) of the work, an individual copy that could, when necessary, serve as an exemplar for other copies, and in the case of the librarians, was made available as a resource for comparison by other scholars.[72] The correction process included the weighing of variant readings (based on both other MSS and internal criteria), resulting in either the marking or deletion of a given reading, or replacement with a conjectural emendation.[73] While Zenodotus was relatively free in his deletions and conjectures, later scholars established a more conservative trend so that the common practice became marking questionable readings (including those added by Zenodotus) with sigla rather than deleting anything

[70] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 110, 215-16.

[71] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 105; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 94, 106.

[72] Van Groningen, "ΕΚΔΟΣΙΣ," 11, 17; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:475.

[73] Cf. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:464-65.

from the text.[74] Although this process resulted in a prototype for the modern critical apparatus, it differed in a number of ways since many of the signs were to aid reading or to correlate with entries in a commentary (in the latter sense, then, the signs corresponded more to the modern footnote).[75]

During the 2nd century, Porphyry, a later contemporary of Origen, offered some enlightening comments on what the process of correction or editing had become by that time. In the *Life of Plotinus*, describing his collection and editing of Plotinus's *Enneads*, Porphyry explains that his task is to "revise all the books and put in the punctuation and correct any verbal errors [εἴ τι ἡμαρτημένον εἴη κατὰ λέξιν διορθοῦν]."[76] In his introduction to a collection of oracles, he uses similar wording and expands on his purpose: "For I myself call the gods to witness, that I have neither added anything, nor taken away from the meaning of the responses, except where I have corrected an erroneous phrase [εἰ μή που λέξιν ἡμαρτιημένην διώρθωσα], or made a change for greater clearness, or completed the metre when defective, or struck out anything that did not conduce to the purpose. . . ."[77] While Porphyry's purposes (in creating collections for publication) go slightly beyond those of the Alexandrian librarians, much of the procedure is the same. The main concern in preserving the original, whether it be Homer or a collection of oracles, is to convey clearly the sense of the author; sometimes clarity requires correcting the wording or meter based on the standards within the work rather

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[74] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 173-74.

[75] Cf. Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism*, 15-16.

[76] Porphyry, *Vit. Plot*. 26 (Armstrong, LCL).

[77] Quoted in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 4.7.1 (E. H. Gifford, trans., *Preparation for the Gospel* [1903; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House: 1981], 157).

than the readings of other MSS. In this context, preferring a difficult reading over a lucid one would make little sense.

A generation later, Eusebius quoted an anonymous author who criticized improper use of διόρθωσις on the text of Scripture.[78] The criticism is leveled against heretics (followers of Theodotus) who incorporate their understanding of geometry and philosophy into Scripture: "For this cause they did not fear to lay hands on the divine scriptures, saying that they had corrected them [λέγοντες αὐτὰς διωρθωκέναι]."[79] A careful comparison of their MSS (i.e., proper διόρθωσις) would show that these copies differ widely, evidencing the many changes they have made.[80] This illustrates both the positive and negative sides of "correcting" a text (also seen with heretics like Marcion[81]): if each scholar is engaged in improving the text based on the individual understanding of authorial intention, then divergent interpretations of that intention can yield divergent forms of the text. Comparison of the differing versions is a necessary control for this great variety, and so the name or location attached to each exemplar becomes important in weighing their value. This same notion, as seen in Origen, was carried over into the correction of translations against the original language.

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[78] The author of this text, commonly referred to as *The Little Labyrinth*, is often identified as Gaius or Caius from the 2nd century C.E. However, this identification is not unanimous. Cf. J. T. Fitzgerald ("Eusebius and *The Little Labyrinth*," in *The Early Church in Its Context: Essays in Honor of Everett Ferguson* [ed. A. J. Malherbe et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1998], 120-46), who summarizes his review of the writing's authorship: "Until a cogent case can be made on behalf of some other early Christian author [than G/Caius or Hippolytus], *The Little Labyrinth* is best viewed as a truly anonymous document" (136).

[79] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 5.28.15 (Lake, LCL).

[80] "For if any be willing to collect and compare with each other the texts of each of them [εἰ γάρ τις θελήσει συγκομίσας αὐτῶν ἑκάστου τὰ ἀντίγραφα ἐξετάζειν πρὸς ἄλληλα], he would find them in great discord, for the copies of Asclepiades do not agree with those of Theodotus . . ." (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.16-17 [Lake, LCL]). For more on this passage, see B. D. Ehrman, "The Theodotians as Corruptors of Scripture," *StPatr* 25 (1993): 46-51.

[81] For more on Marcion, see Chapter 6, below.

When Origen made such comparison between the different versions of the Greek OT, he referred to these copies as editions (ἐκδόσεις). The same term was applied to the work of Zenodotus, and perhaps only one or two others before him. As B. A. van Groningen explains in a detailed study of the term, it refers to a personal copy considered finished by the scholar and deposited for use, such as in a library, but not necessarily published (i.e., copied and disseminated).[82] Van Groningen therefore balks at the idea of translating ἔκδοσις as "edition" because, in modern terms, it implies a standard or critical edition produced for wider use.[83] The "editions" of ancient scholars, rather, were personal copies for the purpose of their own work and sometimes made available for their students, colleagues, or subsequent generations. At times, these ἐκδόσεις were copied and more widely disseminated, but usually by someone other than the original scholar (as we shall see below with Origen). In fact, it seems that a number of editions that had a lasting impact on the scholarly world had little to no effect on the book trade or the *koinē*/vulgate traditions.[84]

While it is clear that ancient scholars were concerned with preserving an accurate textual tradition, their practices and purposes do not correspond exactly to the work of modern textual critics. Even the heralded Homerists of Alexandria were not engaged in producing standard critical editions that would serve as the basis for all future copies and

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[82] Van Groningen, "ΕΚΔΟΣΙΣ."

[83] Despite van Groningen's cautions, I continue to use "edition" for the sake of convenience, since it remains a common translation. While these "editions" were generally not published copies, they were edited or corrected texts (with some form of collation or critical markings, if only for an audience of one), and therefore the translation is not entirely without merit.

[84] Haslam ("Homeric Papyri and Transmission of the Text," 84-85) delineates two very different (if not opposed) views on the subject of whether or not scholarly editions affected the vulgate text, both of which are supported by the MS evidence.

translations. Their criteria, while reasonable and consistent in their own minds, are often considered subjective and therefore inappropriate by the modern scholar. The marginal notes they created consisted of much more than indication of variants. In fact, the one trait in which ancient and modern textual scholarship most correspond is the treatment of textual criticism as a lower criticism: the ancients, like modern scholars, engaged in correcting the text as a means to accessing its meaning. The practice of διόρθωσις was only the first step in the interpretive process.

If the ancient Alexandrians are not to be evaluated by modern standards, then even less so should the ancient Jews. While there are some points of comparison between Greek and Jewish scholarship, the Hebrew worldview, especially prior to the Hellenistic age, was much different from that of the Greeks and thus should be judged by its own standards. Fluidity of text and meaning, as exemplified by the rabbis (and, in a slightly different way, by Origen), was often seen as an opportunity for understanding rather than a problem that must be weeded out of the tradition. Until the work of the Masoretes, there is little to no evidence of the type of textual scholarship exhibited in the Greek (and then Roman) world being applied to the Hebrew text. Once the Hebrew was transferred into the Greek, however, it was a different matter. The Greek Bible was born in the same milieu as Alexandrian criticism, so it should be no surprise that over time it became subject to similar practices. Yet at the heart of this scholarship was always the matter of translation, setting it one step removed from the work of the Homerists. While Aquila and Theodotion were concerned with careful textual study, they were comparing differing languages and translations rather than merely differing MSS. It is this concern

for accurate translation that carried over into the work of Origen and Jerome, where Alexandrian and Jewish influence merged.

2. Old Testament Textual Analysis by Church Fathers

2.1. Origen

These streams of Alexandrian and Jewish scholarship were the two main influences on textual analysis among the early Christians, particularly Origen and those who followed in his shadow. From the Alexandrians, Origen inherited the careful collation of MSS, the comparison with the work of his predecessors, and the textual sigla and sensibilities of Aristarchus. The Jewish influences may be seen in his work as well, especially continuing the effort of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion to compare the Greek against the Hebrew in an effort to produce the most accurate and useful translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. In this was created one of Origen's greatest legacies: the Hexapla.

The Hexapla was a major undertaking, comparing the entire LXX (which had become the standard OT text for the church) against other Greek and Hebrew witnesses. Origen likely began the work in Alexandria (around 230 C.E.) but did not complete the project until over a decade later in Caesarea (by 245 C.E.).[85] As the name "Hexapla" implies, this work of six columns[86]: the Hebrew, Hebrew transliterated into Greek,

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[85] Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 100-101; cf. Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 73; N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* (trans. W. G. E. Watson; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 209-10.

[86] As with any work encompassing the entire Hebrew Bible/OT, this needs to be evaluated on a book-by-book basis. Thus, for Psalms, and possibly other books (such as 2 Kings, Job, Song of Songs, and the Minor Prophets), Origen had three additional MSS available for comparison (the fifth, sixth, and

Aquila, Symmachus, the LXX, and Theodotion.[87] While five of these columns were simply reproduced, the LXX column contained Origen's critical sigla that compared it with the variations in the remaining columns. In his *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen explains the system of marginal notations that he used in his Hexapla:

> Where a point was uncertain in the Septuagint through diversity in the copies, we made our decision from the other versions. What agreed with them we retained. Words not occurring in the Hebrew we marked with an obelus, not daring wholly to remove them. Some words we added, marking them with asterisks, to show that we had inserted them from the other versions in conformity with the Hebrew text, though they were not found in the Septuagint. He who wishes may pass over these words. But if anyone dislikes my method, he must do as he pleases about accepting such words or the reverse.[88]

Here we see a simplified version of the marginal notations used by Aristarchus, consisting of an obelus to indicate readings in the LXX lacking from the Hebrew and an asterisk to denote words Origen has added to the LXX based upon the other versions.[89] Origen exhibits the same conservative trend in place among the Alexandrians after the time of Zenodotus, preferring not to delete any text but simply mark it and allow the

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seventh versions). In other places, the resources were limited, yielding four columns (the Tetrapla) rather than six (Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 50; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.16).

[87] Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 210. Swete offers an explanation for Origen's logic behind the order of the columns: "Aquila is placed next to the Hebrew text because his translation is the most verbally exact, and Symmachus and Theodotion follow Aquila and the LXX. (*sic*) respectively, because Symmachus on the whole is a revision of Aquila, and Thedotion of the LXX." (*Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 65).

[88] *Comm. Matt*. 15.14. Translated by R. B. Tollinton (*Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen* [London: S.P.C.K., 1929], 110). Cf. Jerome, *Ep.* 106.7, where he similarly describes Origen's system and then adds, "These signs are also found in Greek and Latin poetry" (D. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* [Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992], 30-31).

[89] Cf. *Ep. Afr.* 4. The obelus and asterisk were the basis for the system Origen used, but in actuality, necessity required a more complex system, such as the metobelus to mark the end of a lengthy variant, or a combination of the asterisk and obelus to note transposition (Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 70; Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 210).

reader to decide whether the proposed changes should be accepted or rejected.[90] More than simply a nod to tradition, Origen's conservatism toward the LXX base text was a necessity in his theological and historical context because of the great liberties taken with the text by certain heretics. Origen thus shuns the practice of conjectural emendation that was common among the Alexandrians (and still finds a home in modern textual criticism).[91]

Unlike the work of the Alexandrian Homerists, Origen's purpose in creating the Hexapla was not strictly in the interest of producing a scholarly text. In his *Letter to Africanus*, Origen explains his apologetic aims in comparing the versions:

> I make it my endeavour not to be ignorant of their various readings, lest in my controversies with the Jews I should quote to them what is not found in their copies, and that I may make some use of what is found there, even although it should not be in our Scriptures. For if we are so prepared for them in our discussions, they will not, as is their manner, scornfully laugh at Gentile believers for their ignorance of the true readings as they have them.[92]

Sebastian Brock therefore has argued that Origen was in no way interested in reconstructing the original text but only in providing accurate material for Jewish-Christian debate on the Scriptures, and so his primary interest was in the contemporary, living text in use by the local churches and synagogues. The synoptic layout of the Hebrew and Greek Jewish versions provided an easy reference tool to acquaint Christians

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[90] Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:134-35; T. W. Allen states that Origen was less conservative in making additions than Aristarchus (due to Origen giving precedence to the "original"—i.e., the Hebrew—which was unparalleled in Homeric studies), exemplified by Origen's use of the asterisk (marking additions) whereas the Alexandrians were primarily interested in athetizing (marking for deletion) accretions (*Homer: Origins and Transmission* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1924], 320).

[91] Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:134-36. On heresy and changes to the biblical text, see B. D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); on the use of conjectural emendation in text criticism, see, for example, P. Maas, *Textual Criticism* (trans. B. Flower; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958).

[92] *Ep. Afr.* 4 (ANF 4:387).

with the Jewish textual tradition, and the critical sigla clearly pointed out major variations between the Christian and Jewish texts. Yet, as Brock points out, while Origen's goal may have differed from our own, he carried out his work in a very scholarly and reputable manner.[93]

Therefore, while Origen proceeded in his endeavor with the skill of a careful textual analyst, his end goal was not a critical edition. Most significantly, Origen was not attempting to create, in his fifth column annotated with critical sigla, a new edition of the LXX for use by the church.[94] Because Origen's goal, and therefore methods, differed from that of modern textual critics, it has caused problems and garnered criticism in two major ways. First, Origen (like others of his day) treated the Hebrew very uncritically as a unified text. As seen above, the Hebrew tradition was far from unified in the centuries preceding the common era. While it is likely (but not certain) that the Hebrew text had become standardized by the 2nd century C.E., Origen and his contemporaries showed no awareness of any potential differences between the current Hebrew text and the *Vorlage* of the LXX (which was translated during the period of textual diversity).[95] As Brock has pointed out, Origen's only concern was comparing the texts of his own day, not a hypothetical exemplar from three or four centuries previous.[96] This has caused no small headache for modern textual critics, leading to the second major criticism of Origen's work, that he has muddied the waters and obscured rather than clarified the textual history. Thus, while Origen has provided valuable textual witnesses through the

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[93] S. Brock, "Origen's Aims as a Textual Critic of the Old Testament," *StPatr* 10 (1970): 215-18.

[94] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 87.

[95] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 52.

[96] Brock, "Origen's Aims as a Textual Critic," 217.

translations he copied and preserved, the Greek text that emerged from his Hexapla has only made matters more complicated for those seeking the original LXX text, so that modern scholars are largely engaged in trying to undo Origen's work.[97]

Much of Origen's legacy, including the problem of the eclectic, muddied text disseminated by the Hexapla, stems not from Origen but his followers. Upon its completion, the Hexapla in its entirety was housed in the library at Caesarea as a reference work.[98] In this way, it was an "edition" in the more limited sense of the Alexandrian ἐκδόσεις: a work made available as a tool for subsequent scholars but not published or disseminated by the original editor as a standard text. Yet that did not deter Origen's followers from reproducing the fifth column of his text as the standard edition he never intended it to be.[99] Pamphilus, a disciple of Origen, enlisted his own students (including Eusebius) to aid in correcting LXX MSS against Origen's fifth column as well as making new copies.[100] In 330, when Constantine commissioned fifty copies of the Scriptures from Eusebius, the Hexaplaric recension likely served as the exemplar and

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[97] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 53; Ulrich, "Origen's Old Testament Text," 221-22.

[98] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 91; The complete Hexapla was a massive work, totaling around 6500 pages, so it has long been speculated that the work was never reproduced in its entirety (Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 74). However, the MSS that have come to light testify to copies of at least several columns (usually omitting the Hebrew column), and perhaps entire books of the Hexapla (Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 213).

[99] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 87; T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 95. There is disagreement over what exactly the fifth column contained: some think it was an uncorrected text that served as a preparatory work for the real revision project; others see it as a completed, revised text (Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 49; for a fuller discussion of the differing viewpoints, see J. Schaper, "The Origin and Purpose of the Fifth Column of the Hexapla," in *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments: Papers Presented at the Rich Seminar on the Hexapla, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 25th* [*July*]-*3rd August 1994* [ed. A. Salvesen; TSAJ 58; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998], 3-15).

[100] Van Seters, *Edited Bible*, 98; Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 77-78.

thus became the standard text around Caesarea.[101] By 616, the Hexapla was still respected enough text to warrant translation into Syriac by Paul of Tella (along with the critical signs), which became known as the Syro-Hexapla.[102] Once Caesarea fell into Arab hands shortly thereafter, however, the Hexapla largely passed into obscurity, aside from the handful of witnesses still extant today.

From Origen's work on the Hexapla, a few important points can be gleaned relating to his application of textual analysis. Aside from the use of sigla and conservatism in preserving all readings, the very format of the Hexapla illustrates the emphasis on external evidence. Origen relied on a handful of reputable editions (ἐκδόσεις)[103] for comparison. Only when these other versions presented a significant disagreement did Origen turn to internal evidence, here depending on the skills he had inherited from the Homerists.[104] But, along with a training in weighing variants, Origen also received other important traditions from Homeric studies: most notably, that his edition was merely a means to an end (the end goals being apologetics and exegesis), and that the text was ultimately evaluated on its own terms based on a trust in the *oikonomia* of the author and text (for the Homerists, this meant interpreting Homer by Homer; for

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[101] Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 210. T. C. Skeat has argued that the codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are among the copies produced in response to Constantine's request ("The Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Vaticanus and Constantine," *JTS* 50 [1999]: 583-625; see also J. K. Elliott, "T. C. Skeat on the Dating and Origin of Codex Vaticanus," in *The Collected Writings of T. C. Skeat* [ed. J. K. Elliott; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004], 281-94).

[102] Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 211.

[103] Origen uses this term to refer to the other Greek versions of the OT; see *Comm. Matt.* 15.14 and *Ep. Afr.* 5, 12.

[104] Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:121-22.

Origen, it was interpreting Scripture by Scripture).[105] Both of these points were exhibited similarly in Origen's exegesis. The very format of the Hexapla and the conservatism of making every reading available became a trademark of Origen's discussions of variants within his writings. While Origen was well aware of the divergences with the tradition and made them known to his audience, he rarely determined one reading to be more correct; rather, most often he provided a separate exegesis for each variant reading.[106] Where Origen did express opinions on the text, he often judged it by the internal criterion of other scriptural texts, expecting Scripture to have a certain amount of coherence based on divine authorship (just as Homeric texts were expected to have coherence based on Homeric authorship).[107] While such practices may not be common or necessarily respected among modern textual scholarship, they were an integral and reputable part of the scholarship of Origen's day.

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[105] R. C. P. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (1959; repr., Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 180; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 225-27; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:136-38, 276-85. One key difference between Origen and Homeric scholars is his preference for the *koinē* text. For the Homerists, this was the unpolished vulgar text, the one they were trying to improve upon by creating their editions. For Origen, however, the *koinē* was the LXX, the common text adopted by the church, and as such it was indispensable. While Origen, as a scholar, did attempt to improve upon that text by comparison with other versions, he never attempted to usurp the LXX out of respect for church tradition and the belief in divine inspiration of the LXX translation. The inspiration of the LXX did not mean, though, that it took precedence over the Hebrew; that still held the pride of place as the "original" (Cf. Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, 162-65, 177-78).

[106] Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, 175; see also E. Klostermann, "Formen der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes," *TLZ* 72 (1947): 203-8; J. Daniélou, *Origène* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1948), 141; W. McKane, *Selected Christian Hebraists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 197-98. This is particularly common in Origen's OT commentaries, although he followed the same practice with the NT (for more on this, see the next chapter).

[107] Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, 180-82; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:276-85.

2.2. Pamphilus and Eusebius

As noted above, while Origen was responsible for the meticulous work on the Hexapla, the generation that followed him in Caesarea, led by Pamphilus and Eusebius, were largely responsible for the dissemination of his work. Pamphilus was a wealthy and devout Christian, and a great admirer of Origen, who retraced his hero's footsteps by studying in Alexandria with Pierius (another follower of Origen) and then settling in Caesarea. It is Pamphilus's efforts and funds that were the impetus for turning the collection at Caesarea centered on Origen's work into a world-renowned Christian library. Although Pamphilus's life was cut short through martyrdom, he trained well his protégé Eusebius, who would one day become an influential bishop.[108] Pamphilus himself was not only a benefactor and librarian (cataloguer), but he also worked hard as a copyist. His most enduring legacy perhaps is the subscriptions in a number of scriptural MSS that bear his name (preserved by later copyists). These subscriptions bear witness to the text of work that Pamphilus engaged in: he copied or collated books of the Bible from Origen's Hexapla (or a recension based on the Hexapla) and carefully corrected them. Pamphilus was therefore, literally, single-handedly responsible in many ways for the dissemination of Origen's work. But Pamphilus was not alone in this task; he trained not only Eusebius but also a number of others to engage in such efforts along with more advanced scholarship. While a number of these young men met their deaths alongside Pamphilus, Eusebius lived on to continue and advance Pamphilus's efforts.[109]

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[108] A. Grafton and M. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 178-80.

[109] Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, 184-85, 192-94.

While Eusebius's work was founded in the strong textual training he had received from his mentor, his own writings were much more prolific and focused more on history and exegesis. In a sense, Pamphilus represents the work of lower criticism while Eusebius represents higher criticism: Pamphilus poured his energy into establishing quality texts, while Eusebius made use of those texts to provide valuable commentaries and collections of historical and literary information. As a commentator, Eusebius relied heavily on the Hexapla. Like Origen, Eusebius showed respect for the LXX as the accepted text of the church, while also exegeting those portions of text that Origen had added based on their inclusion in the Hebrew.[110] It is clear, then, that the foundational work had already been accomplished by Origen, and those who followed most closely in his footsteps did not need to continue the work in that respect; but they certainly followed in his example as a commentator, comparing versions and MSS (mostly by simply consulting the Hexapla), regularly offering an evaluation of various readings rather than merely accepting one text (the LXX) uncritically.

2.3. Jerome

Despite his theological divide over Origen during the Origenist controversy, Jerome was heavily influenced by Origen's textual scholarship and was the next major Christian scholar to take up the mantle of textual analyst.[111] Like Origen, Jerome was

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[110] M. J. Hollerich, *Eusebius of Caesarea's* Commentary on Isaiah*: Christian Exegesis in the Age of Constantine* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], 75-86. In the case of Isaiah, Hollerich refers to Eusebius using the Tetrapla (only four columns) instead of the later expanded Hexapla, as apparently did Origen in his own commentary on Isaiah (75-76). But regardless of the number of columns, the same principle of comparing the versions (against one another and against the Hebrew) is clearly in use.

[111] Jerome even fancied himself a "Latin Origen." In the days before Jerome got caught up in the Origenist controversy, he had nothing but praise, and defense, for the Alexandrian scholar (S. Rebenich,

trained in the classics,[112] and he carried this textual scholarship into his study of the biblical text. Jerome had already engaged in a number of translation projects (from Greek to Latin) when he was commissioned by Pope Damasus to produce a more accurate Latin translation of Scripture.[113] Faced with a diversity of Latin biblical MSS, Jerome was concerned to create the best text possible. A progression of the methodology and translation theory is clear through the history of his translation work, as is the influence of Origen's textual scholarship. From the very beginning, with his initial efforts on the Gospels, Jerome showed a clear interest in the original language. Also, like Origen, Jerome focused first on a comparison of versions (initially, Greek and Latin; later, Hebrew as well) in order to update the existing text rather than producing a completely new edition or translation. Jerome's first biblical "translations," therefore, were a revision of the Old Latin Gospels based on a comparison with the *Graeca veritas* (the original Greek).[114] When he turned to the OT, starting with the Psalms, Jerome followed a similar method, updating the Latin against the Greek, the revered LXX.

Upon his move from Rome to Bethlehem, Jerome got his first good look at Origen's Hexapla and realized the diversity even in the LXX base text with which he had been working. Jerome then began revising against Origen's final column, his "edition"

Jerome [New York: Routledge, 2002], 35). For more on Jerome's relation to Origen, and the Origenist controversy, see the General Introduction.

[112] Peck, *History of Classical Philology*, 184-85; J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (1975; Repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 10-14. See section 1.1, above, on Latin education and scholarship. The fourfold Greek system for studying a text (see n. 25, above) was similarly adopted in Latin training as *lectio, emendatio, enarratio, judicium*. *Emendatio* is the equivalent of διόρθωσις and was therefore part of the formal Roman training for scholars like Jerome and Augustine. See H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (4th ed.; Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1958), 20-24.

[113] C. Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*: The Creation of the Vulgate," *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996): 48; Kelly, *Jerome*, 86-89.

[114] Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*," 48.

of the LXX that had been disseminated by Eusebius,[115] which Jerome deemed a superior version. Jerome emulated the Hexapla to the extent of reproducing the critical signs used to indicate the differences between the Greek and Hebrew (thus, a critical apparatus).[116] Eventually, however, Jerome was willing to step beyond even Origen and make the *Hebraica veritas* (the original Hebrew), rather than the LXX, the foundation for his revised OT translation.[117] While Origen, writing in Greek, was only one language removed from the original, Jerome's Latin was removed one degree further, and he no longer found it acceptable to make a translation from a translation. As with Origen, Jerome also valued the Hebrew as the "original text" without weighing the value of individual Hebrew MSS against each other, or against LXX MSS.[118] Besides the

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[115] Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*," 49. The question remains whether Jerome was working from the full edition of the Hexapla, with all of its columns, or simply the final annotated LXX column. Neuschäfer believes that Jerome never saw a full copy of the Hexapla but only a copy of the LXX recension: "Whether Jerome ever managed to see a complete edition of the Hexapla is extremely questionable despite his own assertion to the contrary. . . . The hypothesis is likely that Jerome had merely an exemplar of the LXX textual recension of Pamphilius and Eusebius before his eyes . . ." (*Origenes als Philologe*, 1:87, my translation; cf. P. Nautin [*Origène: sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), 214, 284], who is even more extreme in this judgment). If, though, a full copy of the Hexapla was kept in a library in Caesarea, it is possible that Jerome at some point during his residence in the region had access to this copy (see section 2.1, above).

[116] Cf. n. 88, above, for Jerome's description of Origen's critical signs. Of the handful of books that Jerome revised against the Hexapla before he started translating directly from the Hebrew, at least Psalms and Job contain the critical signs (K. K. Hulley ["Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 55 (1944): 91] mentions only the obelus, to note passages lacking from the Hebrew; see also Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*," 46).

[117] S. Rebenich. "Jerome: The 'Vir Trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica Veritas.'" *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993): 52. Whereas Origen was hesitant to change the traditional LXX text and thus included sigla as a reader's aide, not intending a new recension, Jerome was much less timid. He left behind the conservatism of the Alexandrians to forgo the use of critical signs and adopt the Hebrew exemplar wholesale.

[118] While Jerome never formally did textual criticism on his Hebrew exemplar, he did show awareness of differences in the Hebrew MSS, occasionally citing a variant reading in the Hebrew (W. L. Newton, "Influences on St. Jerome's Translation of the Old Testament," *CBQ* 5 [1943]: 18; Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 92). (Brown [*Vir Trilinguis*, 42-52] unfortunately completely misunderstands this point in Hulley [that Jerome only sparingly mentions Hebrew *variants*] and cites instead some of the many "explicit references to O.T. *manuscripts*" [my italics]. Brown then proceeds to do the same for the NT, again completely missing the aim of Metzger's work ["St Jerome's Explicit

scholarly value of working with the original language, Jerome also stated the same apologetic purpose as Origen: to establish the same text as used by the Jews to provide a firm foundation for religious debate.[119] Many in the church disagreed, though, as the repeated explanations in his prefaces, commentaries, and correspondence (most notably, his correspondence with Augustine) make apparent.[120]

While Jerome's choice of base text was in dispute, his textual scholarship was well grounded in the analytical skills of his classical education.[121] Jerome was observant of not only the diversity between the Hebrew Bible and the LXX, but also the variety among the Greek translations and MSS themselves. He remarked on regional preferences for different Greek revisions: Hesychius in Alexandria, Lucian from Constantinople to Antioch, and Origen in Palestine[122]—yet all of these churches believed they were using

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References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (ed. E. Best and R. M. Wilson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 179-90; repr. in *New Testament Studies: Philological, Versional, and Patristic* (NTTS 10; Leiden: Brill; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 199-210]. What Brown does succeed in accomplishing is listing a number of places in which Jerome generally discusses MSS, translations, and versions. For a study of explicit references to *variants*, however, his efforts are all but useless and neither contradict nor expand upon the earlier works of Hulley and Metzger.) A. Kamesar states that while Jerome accepted the Hebrew unconditionally, he "developed a sophisticated series of arguments by which to defend the Hebrew text on internal grounds" (*Jerome, Greek Scholarship and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the "Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim"* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1993], 179). Kelly notes the irony that compared to the Masoretic MSS available to Jerome, the LXX, based on a much earlier version of the Hebrew, at times preserved the more ancient readings (*Jerome*, 159-60).

[119] Kelly, *Jerome*, 160.

[120] On Augustine, see sections 2.4-2.5, below.

[121] Hulley enumerates "four points" relevant to Jerome's text-critical procedure. These are more a collection than a four-step process that would correspond to the Greek process of establishing a text (see section 1.1 and esp. n. 35, above). The four points are: (1) verifying the title of the work; (2) collation of textual readings; (3) evaluation of the manuscripts; (4) the importance of *testimonia* (primarily OT quotations in the NT) ("Principles of Textual Criticism," 89-93). Numbers 2 and 3 are what we would think of more properly as textual criticism, although 1 and 4 have relevance for the larger discussion of the text and its source.

[122] Cf. *Pref. to Vulg. Paral.* (PL 28, 1391A); *Apol.* 2.27; *Pref. in Lib. Paralip.* (PL 28, 1324); Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 88. Brown describes these regional preferences as "text types" (*Vir Trilinguis*, 34-35). Jerome refers to these revisions chiefly as *exemplaria* and *codices*, therefore

the same inspired text. In the face of such variety, Jerome understood the need to weigh the versional and MS evidence to establish the most accurate text. While Origen's column of the Hexapla with critical signs laid the groundwork in this respect, Jerome was also aware of the diversity further introduced by the copyists and that a MS was only as reliable as the scribe who copied it. When dealing with translations (such as the numerous Old Latin translations that Jerome initially set out to revise against the Greek), he also encountered a number of issues relating to translation choices and awareness of variants in the Greek that lay behind the Latin.[123] But as his classical training had taught him, the careful weighing of MSS was only a means to an end: the true goal was to read, understand, and comment upon the meaning of the text.

It was perhaps because of this last point that despite his staunch belief in the superior value of the Hebrew text as a base for translation, Jerome never completely abandoned the LXX. A churchman as well as a scholar, Jerome produced a number of biblical commentaries, which merged the two worlds he was attempting to bridge. It was his common practice to include, and often explicate, both the Hebrew and LXX versions; he also appealed to both Christian and rabbinic interpretations of the text.[124] In these exegetical works, along with his apologetic writings and correspondence, Jerome proved himself conversant in both the Hebrew and the LXX texts, and he would willingly appeal

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keeping his discussion in the realm of MSS rather than recensions or editions. He reserves the latter terms for the LXX itself (occasionally referring to it as *editio*) and the three versions (*recentiores*) of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (on terminology, see section 1.4, above, and Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*," 45).

[123] Hulley summarizes three categories of textual errors noted by Jerome: "errors of translation; errors caused by ill-judged attempts at textual emendation; errors made by careless or incompetent copyists" ("Principles of Textual Criticism," 88-89; see also Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, 35-38).

[124] Kelly describes this exegetical method as "dictated by his anxiety to leave no loophole to malicious critics" (*Jerome*, 164; cf. Jerome, *Comm. on Nahum*, 3.8-12). Origen was an important source not only for Jerome's textual work, but also for his commentary and exegesis, as Jerome drew heavily on Origen when citing previous Christian interpretations. (See further Kelly, *Jerome*, 164, 302-4; Rebenich, "Jerome," 53-54.)

to whichever was most appropriate to the conversation at hand.[125] That did not mean, though, that Jerome abandoned the debate, and when an up-and-coming young theologian challenged him on the matter of choosing the Hebrew over the LXX, Jerome held nothing back in his replies.

2.4. The Correspondence between Jerome and Augustine

By the time Augustine began his inquiries into Jerome's translation choices, Jerome was well into his project of translating from the Hebrew, and well-practiced at defending himself against detractors. At the time, Augustine was not yet the great bishop he later became, and the two men had not met one another. The Origenist controversy was also in full swing, so the touchy subject of Origen's theology versus his value as a textual scholar underlay much of the conversation and at times boiled to the surface. The correspondence between Jerome and Augustine especially highlights Augustine's stance on the LXX (common to many in the church in his day) and Jerome's defense of his translation choices.

The correspondence between the two great theologians was not an easy one, as it was fraught with mis-deliveries and misunderstandings.[126] Augustine initiated the

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[125] As Rebenich puts it, "Jerome developed a flexible response to vilification" (*Jerome*, 58; see also Rebenich, "Jerome," 64-65). In Pauline terms, perhaps we could say that Jerome became all things to all people (1 Cor 9:22), as the situation demanded.

[126] For a description and translation of the correspondence, see especially C. White, *The Correspondence (394-419) Between Jerome and Augustine of Hippo* (Studies in Bible and Early Christianity 23; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1990). See also A. Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Münster: Westfalen Aschendorff, 1999); R. Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustin und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2, 11-14* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Kelly, *Jerome*, 263-72. The strong personalities of both Jerome and Augustine shine through in these letters, and the tone of their rhetoric, colored with both courtesy and sarcasm, has been interpreted in varying ways (e.g., Rebenich [*Jerome*, 45-46] refers to Augustine's first letter as launching his first attack against Jerome, with what Jerome later called a "honey-coated sword" [Jerome, *Ep*. 105.2];

conversation (*Ep.* 28), requesting that Jerome provide more translations of Greek exegetes, like Origen, and that he translate the OT from the Hexapla rather than the Hebrew.[127] Unfortunately, the courier never made the journey, so Jerome did not receive this letter (a decade later, Augustine sent a copy of it along with *Ep.* 71). Five years later, Augustine made another attempt at the same requests (*Ep.* 40), but again fate interrupted: instead of being delivered directly to Jerome, the letter appeared in Rome first and circulated there. The rumors of the letter reached Jerome long before the letter itself, giving him ample time to become agitated over what he perceived as an attack against his theology and translation choices. Augustine heard of the misunderstanding and sent another letter (*Ep.* 67), defending himself and denying rumors that he had written a book against Jerome. This letter Jerome finally did receive; he asked the courier to wait while he composed a reply, which was less than genial and was accompanied by a copy of Jerome's apology *Against Rufinus* (as a possible warning about how Jerome responded to books written against him).

Before Augustine received this reply, he was busy compiling all the previous letters to Jerome and sent them along with one more (*Ep*. 71) in another attempt to clarify his questions and motives. In this latest letter, Augustine commented further on Jerome's translation of Job from the Hebrew and asserted the theological superiority of the LXX over the Hebrew text. Jerome and Augustine exchanged additional letters attempting to smooth over the personal differences that had arisen between them (Augustine appealed

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Kelly [*Jerome*, 263-64] instead describes Augustine as "eager for closer relations with his famous contemporary").

[127] Some of the other major subjects in these letters were the dispute between Peter and Paul in Gal 2, the origin of the human soul, and James 2:10. Later in their correspondence, Jerome and Augustine found more common ground as they turned a unified face against the latest theological controversy: Pelagianism.

to the nature of Christian friendship as reason to find a common ground), distracting them from the actual conversation topics. It was not until *Ep*. 112, ten years after Augustine's initial letter (*Ep.* 28), that Jerome finally wrote a detailed response to the questions about the LXX and Hebrew. In *Ep.* 82, once the two men were on better terms with each other, Augustine replied that he was persuaded on the value of the Hebrew text, but he still preferred the LXX and wished for a copy of it in Latin.

Two OT books in particular are mentioned in this conversation, which help to illustrate the broader concerns. From his very first letter (*Ep.* 28), Augustine refers to Jerome's translation of Job and the diacritical signs used there. Although Jerome eventually went on to translate the entire OT from Hebrew, when he initially began his revisions against the Hexapla, Job is one of the few books that Jerome completed before moving exclusively to the Hebrew. By *Ep.* 71, Augustine shows awareness that Jerome has also translated Job from the Hebrew, but notes that the copy he himself has is the revision from the Hexapla, complete with Hexaplaric signs. Augustine prefers that Jerome would do more work like this, translating from the LXX, for two main reasons: (1) if the Latin translation is based on something other than the Greek OT, then the Latin and Greek churches will be using different versions of the Scriptures; and (2) because the Latin Christians do not have access to the Hebrew MSS that Jerome used, they must rely entirely upon him and his interpretation. As an example of the second problem, Augustine mentions the other OT book that illustrates the larger issues: Jonah.

Augustine tells the anecdote of a reading from Jerome's translation of Jonah during a church service in Oea. When the congregation heard the rendering "hedera" (ivy) instead of the long-familiar "cucurbita" (gourd) at 4:6, there was an uproar. The

bishop was so concerned that he would no longer have a congregation if he did not resolve this discrepancy, he consulted the Jews about the Hebrew reading. They told him that the Hebrew word meant the same as the Greek and Latin. The bishop then corrected Jerome's translation to once again read "gourd." Augustine deduces that "you [Jerome], too, can be mistaken occasionally," and shows his concern that Christians will not be able to make such corrections with no access to Hebrew texts, and reliance only upon Jerome or the Jews.[128] For Jerome, controversy over this verse was an old discussion, one he had already addressed with Canterius and Rufinus and had defended in his *Commentary on Jonah*. Jerome's reply to Augustine in a way corroborates Augustine's point, since Jerome believes the Jews consulted in this instance answered wrongfully out of spite. But Jerome's defense also illustrates how he, like the classical scholars before him, at times had to go beyond mere philology to decide upon the best rendering of the text: since Jerome was living in Palestine, he relied on his investigation of local botany to determine what plant the Hebrew referred to, and he settled on the closest equivalent in Latin as his translation.[129] The stir this choice caused was based more on preference for the traditional text than linguistic or botanical grounds.[130]

In the two reasons Augustine delineates for preferring a translation from the LXX, a key difference comes to the forefront: Jerome translated from Hebrew out of concern for dialogue with the Jews, but Augustine wanted to maintain a common base text throughout the church to facilitate dialogue between Greek and Latin Christians. In a

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[128] Augustine, *Ep*. 71.5 (White, *Correspondence*, 93); cf. Jerome, *Ep.* 112.19; Kelly, *Jerome*, 266.

[129] Jerome, *Ep*. 112.22 (White, *Correspondence*, 136-37). Cf. Jerome, *Comm. on Jonah* 4.6.

[130] Rebenich, "Jerome," 58-60.

sense, the Hexapla provided the best compromise between the two concerns, since it allowed a comparison with the Hebrew while maintaining the LXX as the primary text. However, Jerome did not see this as sufficient, and most modern scholars would agree. Part of Jerome's response to Augustine appeals to the fact that the church was using Theodotion's version of Daniel, not the LXX. Jerome says, if the church would accept the translation of a Jew (Theodotion), should they not be even more eager to accept the translation of a Christian (Jerome)?[131]

One other major difference between Jerome and Augustine, which the latter would not fully formulate until after their correspondence on the matter was long past, is the understanding of the LXX as the inspired text of the church.[132] This was also the basis for one of the most severe accusations against Jerome's translation. Rufinus especially accused him of Judaizing the Scriptures and deviating from Christian tradition.[133] While Jerome defended that he was bringing the Latin closer to the original through his appeal to the Hebrew, what was in dispute was the very definition of "original," or more significantly, which text form was authoritative for the church. Even beginning with Origen, there was a nascent idea that the inspired translation of the LXX gave it a greater authority than the text from which it was translated, and that the LXX had become the dispensation of the OT for the Gentiles. Epiphanius articulated this idea more fully, later followed by Augustine.[134] As a linguist and scholar, Jerome clearly did

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[131] Jerome, *Ep.* 112.19 (White, *Correspondence*, 133).

[132] See esp. *City of God* 18.43 (cf. W. H. Semple, "St. Jerome as Biblical Translator," *BJRL* 48 [1965]: 242). For more on Augustine, see section 2.4, below.

[133] Rebenich, "Jerome," 63.

[134] Kamesar, *Jerome,* 34.

not adhere to this same belief. But as a theologian, neither did he try to overturn it completely. This belief in the supremacy of the LXX therefore kept Jerome's Vulgate from overwhelming acceptance by the church for generations after his death.

It is clear particularly through this debate over the Hebrew versus the LXX that while Jerome in many ways followed closely in the footsteps of Origen the textual analyst, Jerome was known even more as a translator. The very nature of Jerome's position as a Latin scholar, always at least one language removed from the original, necessitated that translation be his ultimate focus. While Origen's skills as a textual analyst therefore shone most brightly with his work on the Hexapla, Jerome's skills with variants and MSS came through perhaps most clearly in his commentaries, and occasionally in his letters, where he could note and comment on varying textual readings. Jerome was certainly alert to the variations among MSS and the role played in this by their scribes, but his ultimate interest lay in the differences between translations and versions. Thus, Jerome's work on the text itself was not to create an edition or recension with a critical apparatus, such as the Hexaplaric recension, but to produce a translation, and his most lasting work, the Vulgate.

2.5. Augustine

Shortly after Augustine wrote his first letter to Jerome (*Ep.* 28, which was not delivered until years later) with his initial questions about the LXX, he composed the first three books of *On Christian Doctrine*. In Book 2, Augustine discusses the importance of learning both Greek and Hebrew to be able to consult the original language when a translation is problematic. Like Jerome before him, Augustine was keenly aware of the

variety among the Latin biblical translations and the need for a better quality and more standardized Latin text.[135] On the bright side, Augustine points out, the abundance of translations allows the student who does not know the original language to compare multiple translations to help elucidate a difficult passage.[136] But he encourages students of Scripture to be adept enough in the original languages that, rather than merely rely on Latin translations, they can correct the translations through the comparison of multiple copies.[137]

Augustine illustrates this recommended method in his own commentaries. This is most clear on the occasions when the Latin translation Augustine explicates does not follow another known translation (such as the Vulgate or the text of the Freising MS) but rather is adapted based on his own evaluation of the underlying Greek text.[138] Unlike Jerome, Augustine was not attempting to create a new or revised Latin translation to be made available to the wider church. But following in the style of his Roman education (based on the earlier Hellenistic model applied to Homeric texts), Augustine knew that before a writing can be properly evaluated, the form of the text must be weighed and established.[139] Augustine's work as a textual analyst, then, and the role he urged for

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[135] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.11 (16). Cf. *Faust.* 11.2; 32.16, where Augustine again emphasizes the need for recourse to the original languages when the translations are not sufficient to clarify a passage.

[136] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.12 (17-18).

[137] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.12 (18); 14 (21).

[138] A. Souter compares Augustine's quotations from the Pauline epistles against the Freising MS to determine where Augustine emended his text and states that "for this part of the Bible at least, Augustine was a real text critic" (*The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1927], 148).

[139] Cf. n. 112, above. D. de Bruyne has done an extensive study of Augustine's biblical quotations to evaluate the revisions he made to the Latin translations (*Saint Augustin: Reviseur de la Bible* [Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931]). While there remain larger questions of what version of certain

other Christian scholars was to follow in the tradition of comparing MSS and verifying the text itself before moving on to the next step of commentary and criticism.

In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine also offers criteria by which to weigh various versions and translations, here once again showing his preference for the Greek Scriptures over the Hebrew. Among the Latin copies, Augustine recommends the *Itala*, or otherwise the most literal translations, as best conveying the underlying Greek. For the NT, he prefers the MSS found in the "more learned and careful" (doctiores et diligentiores) churches. For the OT, he asserts that, as the "more experienced" (peritiores) churches[140] testify, the Greek is superior to the Hebrew as a translation inspired by the Holy Spirit to be the most suited to the Gentiles. Moreover, it is the consensus of the Seventy rather than just one translator.[141] Therefore, while Augustine does value the original languages over translation, he places greater authority with the texts used by the churches, the agreement of the many translators over just one, and divine inspiration of the translation.

Augustine lays out the same points even more explicitly, this time mentioning Jerome by name, in Book 18 of *The City of God*.[142] While Augustine does show respect

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books were available to Augustine (such as the Vulgate copy of the Pauline epistles and whether they were translated by Jerome), the many occasions where Augustine refers to the underlying Greek show his concern to establish the best possible text before proceeding to his exegesis.

[140] Edmund Hill translates this as "more learned Churches" and suggests that this does not necessarily refer to the Greek churches but more likely the churches of Carthage, Rome, and Milan (and Augustine "would soon have won the right to include the Church of Hippo Regius among them") (*Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana* [Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City, 1996], 140, 164 n. 51).

[141] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.15 (22).

[142] Augustine composed and published this magnum opus in parts over several years. The later books, including 18, were not completed until after Jerome's death. See P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 303; A. Trapè, "Saint Augustine," in Vol. 4 of *Patrology* (ed. A. di Berardino, J. Quasten; trans. P. Solari; 1986; repr. Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1995), 363; Semple, "St. Jerome as Biblical Translator," 242.

for Jerome's learning and great labor on behalf of the church, and even acknowledges that his translation from the Hebrew is accurate and corrects some translation mistakes from the LXX, he maintains that the witness of just one translator cannot outweigh the agreement of so many (the Seventy). Augustine values this version not only over Jerome, but also over Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and "the fifth" (likely here referring to the columns of the Hexapla). More than simply being directed by the Holy Spirit, the Seventy were indeed prophets, since they worked by the same Spirit who was at work in the biblical prophets. Augustine also alludes to the work of Origen, emphasizing that he used critical signs to mark differences from the Hebrew rather than daring to omit anything from the LXX text. Therefore, Augustine explains differences between the Hebrew and LXX as the same Spirit speaking through different prophets, just as the same Spirit spoke different words through both Isaiah and Jeremiah.[143] In Augustine, then, we see a progression from the classical scholarship of Origen to a more ecclesial and theological basis for textual authority. This latter attitude would prevail until the Reformers took up the mantle of Jerome, ironically, to overturn the primacy of the Vulgate.

2.6. Alexandria and Antioch

While Jerome and Augustine testify to the far-reaching influence of Origen in the Latin West, other examples of textual scholarship may be found, particularly in the East. As Jerome noted, by his day different versions of the Scriptures (especially the OT) had

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[143] Augustine, *Civ.* 18.43; cf. 15.14. A good portion of Book 18 preceding paragraph 43 has dealt with various prophets, so this may account for his choice of illustration here, or conversely, his choice of discussing translation issues in this book.

emerged in three regions: Antioch, Palestine, and Alexandria. Of the three, Origen's work remained predominant in Caesarea of Palestine; Alexandria and Antioch were thriving as strong centers of Christian education and exegesis, although at times diametrically opposed in their methods. Although the two cities represented different approaches to biblical interpretation,[144] their Greek education trained them to begin at the same starting point for their interpretation, namely the best quality text.

Alexandria held a reputation as the birthplace of the two most important figures in the early history of the Christian OT: the LXX and Origen. With his move to Caesarea, the true mantle of Origen's textual scholarship also moved there, but the same vigor of Christian learning that shaped his own work continued to thrive among the Alexandrian scholars. In the 3rd century, not long after the time of Origen, Pamphilus first headed to Alexandria to pursue his studies under Pierius before moving to Caesarea. Pierius was also one of the sources that Jerome relied upon in his commentaries. A century later, Didymus educated a new generation of scholars, which included Rufinus, and perhaps Jerome as well. When listing the versions of the text in use in different regions, Jerome states that the version of the LXX used in Alexandria and Egypt was credited to the authority (and editing?) of Hesychius, but no edition or recension that rivaled Origen's Hexapla in its scope or influence emerged from the subsequent generations of Alexandrian scholars.

Some examples from the commentaries of Didymus and Cyril will serve to show the interest in the text among the Alexandrian scholars of the 4th and 5th centuries. Among Didymus's OT commentaries, the *Commentary on Zechariah* is the only one for

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[144] See, for example, F. M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161-85.

which we have a complete copy in Greek (with some lacunae). Only once in this work does Didymus refer to a variant in the text of Zechariah (at 1:21); on a few other occasions, he also refers to variants in other scriptural citations.[145] Rather than referring to the versions of the Three (Symmachus, Aquila, and Theodotion), Didymus typically mentions "manuscripts" (ἀντίγραφα) as containing a variant. In fact, the only time in this commentary that Didymus refers to any of the Three by name is simply to mention them as translators, not to cite their readings.[146] When he does cite their readings, he refers to them generally as "the translators" or "another translator."[147] Altogether, the references to variants are rather sparse and not cited in a critical manner with an eye to evaluate the best form of the text. He does deem these variations significant enough to merit mention, but only to refer to them in passing with no further comments, or to use them to further elucidate the meaning of the text.

Didymus's commentary was composed at the request of Jerome, and was subsequently used by Jerome (along with Origen's commentary) in his own commentary on the Book of the Twelve. Cyril, in turn, relied on the work of Didymus and Jerome when composing his commentary on the twelve minor prophets.[148] When Cyril comments on the readings of the versions of the Three, then, he is generally culling this

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[145] Didymus the Blind, *Commentary on Zechariah* (trans. R. C. Hill; FC 111; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 8 (see also pp. 46, 103, 106-7, 273, 315).

[146] Didymus, *Comm. Zech.* 12:10 (comparing it with the citation in John 19:37).

[147] Didymus, *Comm. Zech.* 5:1-4; 14:4-5.

[148] Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets* (trans. R. C. Hill; FC 115; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 6. Since Jerome was also dependent upon Origen for his commentary, it would be interesting to know how many of the comments on variants or versions that appear in Cyril's commentary inadvertently derive from his Alexandrian predecessor because of their transmission by Jerome. Unfortunately, Origen's commentary is no longer extant for us to judge this directly.

information from Jerome. But Cyril does not always rely on Jerome's textual decisions, often preferring instead the reading of his Alexandrian LXX.[149] Like Didymus, Cyril refers generally to "other translators" ("other" meaning besides the LXX) rather than naming the Three.[150] He also occasionally refers to "the Hebrew," evidence of his dependence on Jerome. Where Cyril sparingly includes such references, it is often only in passing or to clarify the passage through an alternate understanding of the translation. Therefore, his use and comments on textual variation are not unlike that of Didymus, although distinctly differing from Jerome, who clearly included the Hebrew out of his belief in its superiority. These two examples of Didymus and Cyril show that in the centuries after Origen, while the same style of allegorical exegesis may have been alive and well in Alexandria, the textual scholarship among the commentators was largely dependent upon the work of their predecessors. In this way, they appear to have more in common with their own generation throughout Christendom than with the Alexandrian scholars of the past.

Perhaps more than any other city in the East, Antioch was known as a rival to Alexandria in the scholars that it produced. Diodore of Tarsus earned a reputation both as a scholar in his own right and as the mentor to two influential pupils, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Whether directly as his teacher or merely a predecessor, Theodore also had an influence in shaping the scholarship of his younger contemporary

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[149] Hill, FC 115:7.

[150] See, for example, his commentary on Hosea 5:8-9 or 11:2-4; cf. Hosea 7:15-16, where Hill notes that Cyril is not dependent on Jerome or Theodore for his knowledge of this alternate translation (FC 115:162 n. 27).

Theodoret of Cyrrhus.[151] While Jerome identified the text form preferred in Antioch as the text of Lucian (Jerome describes this as a revision of Origen's text), it is unclear what role, if any, Lucian may have had in this (or whether this version could even be termed an edition or recension). Regardless of Lucian's involvement, by the time of these great exegetes, an Antiochene form of the LXX text had emerged with its own distinctives.[152] Similar to Augustine, Antiochene scholars like John Chrysostom and Theodore argued for the superiority of the LXX over any other form of the OT, even if they recognized the weaknesses of the LXX translation (in comparison with other Greek versions, or as a translation rather than the original language).[153] But this preference for the LXX did not prevent them from occasionally referring to the readings of the other versions.

To varying degrees, interest in textual matters may be found among the commentaries of the premier Antiochene scholars and exegetes. References to OT variants occur most frequently among the works of Theodore and Theodoret, and to a lesser extent Diodore and John Chrysostom.[154] The opinions on Theodore of Mopsuestia's skill as a textual critic of the OT are mixed, as is the evidence from his

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[151] R. C. Hill, *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch* (Bible in Ancient Christianity 5; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005), 6-7.

[152] Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 57-60.

[153] Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 55-56.

[154] R. C. Hill offers a negative assessment of Diodore's textual criticism in comparison to the other Antiochene scholars; Hill is particularly critical of Diodore's lack of Hebrew knowledge (a fault that he passed on to his students) and his lack of comparison against the Hexapla (*Diodore of Tarsus: Commentary on Psalms 1-51* [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005], xxxiv, 118 n. 3). While Diodore's extant writings are limited, giving less grounds for comparison, Psalms is a key text to use for such comparison (cf. Theodore's textual comments on Psalms and yet lack of such comments for the Book of the Twelve). Chrysostom's discussions appear mostly frequently in his fragments on Job and Jeremiah, in which cases he compares the LXX against the readings of the Three. He also makes occasional references to variants in his homilies on Psalms (see Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 69-70). But in light of the large body of his extant work, such a small representation (especially confined to the catenae, which are always challenging in terms of accurate attribution) stands out: comments on variants were not a high priority in Chrysostom's writings.

different commentaries.[155] In his commentary on the Psalms, he refers occasionally to the readings of the Three translations (Symmachus, Aquila, and Theodotion). But in his subsequent commentary on the twelve minor prophets, Theodore makes no such references, either to the Three or to the readings of other MSS; he does make occasional reference to the Hebrew or the Syriac, although there is no indication that he knew either language.[156] Whether or not Theodore had access to the Hexapla,[157] his textual comments were apparently dependent on whatever source he had before him. In other words, when working with a MS (or MSS) of the Psalms that contained the readings of the Three, Theodore commented on their readings; but when he used a copy of the Twelve that did not contain such comparisons, he did not do further research for himself to evaluate alternate readings.

The Antiochene scholar who most frequently and broadly commented on the OT text is Theodoret. Not only did he make extensive use of the versions through consulting the Hexapla, but he also had one further asset: a knowledge of Syriac, which allowed him to comment on the readings of the Peshitta. His understanding of this Semitic language may have also given him access to either the Hebrew of the OT, or at least the Hebrew transliteration in the Hexapla, if that column was available in the copy he used. While

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[155] For example, D. Tyng ("Theodore of Mopsuestia as an Interpreter of the Old Testament," *JBL* 50 [1931]: 302) states that Theodore "has no interest nor competence in textual criticism," while D. Z. Zaharopoulos (*Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Bible: A Study of His Old Testament Exegesis* [New York: Paulist, 1989], 118) says that in his *Commentary on Psalms* "Theodore's excellence as a textual critic is made very apparent." In the end, it is clear that Tyng and Zaharopolous are using the same data to reach different conclusions, based on their standards: Tyng is holding Theodore up to the expectations of modern textual criticism, leaving Theodore to fail miserably; Zaharopolous is more generous, comparing Theodore only to his contemporaries, which makes the assessment much more favorable.

[156] Zaharopoulos, *Theodore of Mopsuestia*, 58-59; Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 65-68.

[157] Zaharopoulos (*Theodore of Mopsuestia*, 64-66) determines that Theodore did not use the Hexapla, but his references to the Three in his commentary on Psalms suggests that he at least had access to a copy of the Psalms (or a previous commentary on the Psalms) with Hexaplaric readings.

Theodoret held to the LXX as his primary edition—echoing a logic voiced also by Augustine, that the testimony of seventy was greater than the testimony of a single witness, or even three—he also used the versions more critically, sometimes preferring their reading to that of the LXX.[158] However, on other occasions, Theodoret referred to the versions more as a polemic against the Jews, to point out the significant differences in translation between the "Christian" Scriptures (the LXX) and the versions translated by Jews.[159] But Theodoret did not always present the versions in order to show preference for or against the LXX; at times he used the various translations to help elucidate the text by showing different ways of interpreting a difficult term.[160] In this, it is seen that although Theodoret gave a great deal more attention to textual matters than some of his contemporaries or predecessors, like the others his ultimate aim was not merely to establish the best text but to provide the best interpretation for a clear and proper understanding of Scripture.

2.7. Conclusion

While the work that earlier Christian scholars did on the OT text provided a foundation for the work they would also do on the NT, both then as now, the two testaments at many points presented a different set of textual issues. During the first centuries of the church, the OT had a longer and more complicated history, and (at first) a larger role in polemics, and understandably drew greater attention by the textual scholars

[158] Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 70-72.

[159] For example, in the debate over Isa 7:14, Theodoret criticizes the Three for translating "young woman" instead of accepting the testimony of so great a number as the Seventy and reading "virgin" (*Comm. Isa.* 7:14; see Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 72).

[160] Hill, *Reading the Old Testament*, 73.

in emerging Christianity. The primary issue with the Christian OT was translation—very few of the Greek and Latin fathers knew enough Hebrew to deal with the original language directly, and regardless of the Hebrew readings, the early church always gave preference to the Greek LXX. The comparison of textual readings in the OT was first and foremost a comparison of translations. When the readings of MSS were noted, these were typically variations in Greek MSS, not Hebrew.

The groundbreaking and definitive work on the OT among early Christians was accomplished by Origen. All subsequent textual scholarship appears to be derivative from or dependent on this, but never a rival work from scratch. In his commentaries, Origen also set the tone as a textual analyst: the OT text was his first priority, and any commentary on the state of the NT text was a second thought. If any of the fathers were text critics, they were OT text critics (or, more accurately, LXX text critics) who dabbled in NT textual criticism.[161] Yet, some of the same issues and applications that arose in references to OT variants would also emerge with the NT, such as dealing with the text in translation (in Latin), use of textual variants in commentaries (often noting variants only occasionally or passing), or addressing textual variations in a polemical or apologetic context. Therefore, while the external evidence for the OT was different and by necessity required different discussion or treatment, that did not largely impact the use of internal evidence for the OT and NT texts: both were considered and as such were treated fundamentally the same.

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[161] It is telling that in J. G. Prior's overview of textual criticism by the fathers up through the middle ages, the majority of the examples he gives refer to the OT (*The Historical Critical Method in Catholic Exegesis* [Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2001], 64-70).

The next three chapters will examine in detail how the church fathers, both Greek and Latin, referred to and made use of textual variants in the NT text. Chapter 6 will then return to some of the themes in this chapter to synthesize the information of the intervening chapters and discuss in more detail how patristic scholarship on the NT text related to textual analysis in general or to the work being done on the OT text.

CHAPTER 2

NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS BY GREEK FATHERS

The early church fathers referred to variant readings in the NT text to varying degrees, for different reasons, and to serve different purposes. A comparison of such discussions, by author (Chaps. 2-3) and then by biblical reference (Chap. 4), will highlight points of comparison and divergence, and any tendencies by particular writers. The separation between Greek and Latin authors is in some ways a false division, but it also helps to distinguish issues relating to translation that were exclusive to those using the Latin versions. The Greek fathers will be discussed here first, followed by the Latin fathers in Chapter 3.

In this chapter and the next, the patristic authors are addressed in roughly chronological order. Only undisputed works are given serious consideration, although more uncertain works, such as scholia, are noted as possible corroborating data. The works discussed are only representative of where that father explicitly mentions NT variants and therefore may not provide an adequate picture of his fuller body of work (such as in the case of John Chrysostom). More detailed attention is given to those writers who show the greatest concern for textual matters, especially Origen. Any summarizing conclusions are withheld until Chapter 5, when both Greek and Latin authors will be considered together.

1. Irenaeus

Within a century of the composition of the NT, the writings had begun to be widely disseminated enough that discrepancies between the copies required commentary. In his work addressing heresies, Irenaeus makes note of the fact that in some copies of Revelation the number of the beast is 616 rather than 666 (**Rev 13:18**; §190).[1] The latter he deems to be the correct reading, based on its presence in the best and oldest copies (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς σπουδαίοις καὶ ἀρχαίοις ἀντιγράφοις), the witness of John's contemporaries, and the logic that the number of the beast would contain three identical digits (since "six" represents apostasy, and three sixes shows the fullness of the beast's apostasy). Here, we see Irenaeus use a combination of external and internal evidence.[2] His first appeal is to the character of the MSS that read 666. Later in the passage, he follows this up with an explanation of how the variant could have occurred in the inferior copies: a scribe, either intentionally or unintentionally, replaced the character ξ (60) with ι (10).[3] Others then received this erroneous reading without question and sought to interpret the number. Preoccupied as he is with countering heresies, Irenaeus is

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[1] Throughout this chapter, verse references in bold indicate texts that may be found in the Catalogue or Additional Texts in Volume II, below, and the paragraph numbering (§) refers to the numbering in the Catalogue.

[2] See also B. M. Metzger, "The Practice of Textual Criticism Among the Church Fathers," *StPatr* 12 (1975): 341, where he lists out the various criteria employed by Irenaeus here.

[3] Considering their uncial forms (Ξ and I), it is difficult to see how a scribe would simply mistake one character for the other, although it would depend on the hand of the exemplar; however, if the character were obscured in any way, the confusion would be plausible. For further discussion of the possible confusion of these letters, see J. N. Birdsall, "Irenaeus and the Number of the Beast: Revelation 13,18," in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel* (ed. A. Denaux; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 349-59. Bruce Metzger explains how the change could be intentional based on the Hebrew characters for the Latin form of "Nero Caesar," although this requires the scribe not only to be clever, but to do so in three different languages (*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2nd ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994], 676; see also E. Nestle, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament* [trans. W. Edie; 1901; repr. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001], 334). Alternatively, 616 could represent another name, such as Gaius Caesar (cf. Birdsall, "Irenaeus and the Number of the Beast," 358).

especially concerned with this result since the readers will miss the truth and, therefore, might be deceived by the Antichrist (failing to recognize him because they misinterpreted the number), but also because any who follow this error intentionally are under the judgment of those who would alter the text (cf. Rev 22:18-19).

Aside from an appeal to the quality of the MSS and copyists, Irenaeus also notes internal evidence for his textual certainty: the testimony of those who knew John, and the logic of the number 666. Irenaeus does not elaborate on the first criterion, but it seems to be an appeal to history or tradition, that the number passed down through the church since John's time agrees with the accepted reading. The second criterion is based on both a type of numerology (the value of the number six) and the coherence of Scripture. Irenaeus has already argued, based on examples from the OT and history of Israel, that the number six represents apostasy. He expects the number in John's Revelation to be in prophetic agreement: the Antichrist is thus the fulfillment of all apostasy, having a six at the beginning, middle, and end, to symbolize that apostasy exists at the beginning, middle (both just proved by his appeal to the OT), and end (based on Revelation) times.

This reference to the MS tradition and highlighting of a variant is rare for Irenaeus. As the conclusion of his discussion on the variant shows, his main concern is to correct false teaching and thus prevent heresy. Due to the genre of *Against Heresies* and limited amount of extant writings from Irenaeus, we should not necessarily expect to find more frequent occurrences of such discussions. This one instance does show that he was alert to transcriptional errors in the MS tradition, but we cannot know for certain whether Irenaeus had actually seen copies at variance with one another or simply had learned of such a problem from others. However, a comment by Irenaeus at the end of one of his

writings provides good insight into his wariness of scribal practices: "If, dear reader, you should transcribe this little book, I adjure you . . . to compare your transcript and correct it carefully by this copy [κατορθώσῃς αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸ ἀντίγραφον τοῦτο], from which you have made your transcript. This adjuration likewise you must transcribe and include in your copy."[4] Clearly, Irenaeus was alert to variances within the MS tradition, whether of religious documents or his own writings, and was concerned about how a mistake in a copy could lead a reader astray.

2. Origen

More than any other church father, Origen comments on the diversity among the NT MSS. In fact, if he cannot be called the father of NT text criticism itself,[5] he can certainly be pointed to as the source of much subsequent textual discussion. One important question regarding Origen's treatment of the NT is whether he ever undertook an edition of the NT text that compared with his work on the Hexapla. In the *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen discusses this very matter. He states the difficulty he has found with copies of the NT: "But it is a recognized fact that there is much diversity

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[4] As cited by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.20.2; *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (trans. G. A. Williamson; 1965; repr. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1995), 227. This writing by Irenaeus, *On the Ogdoad*, is otherwise lost.

[5] Bruce Metzger's evaluation is that Origen "was an acute observer of textual phenomena but was quite uncritical in his evaluation of their significance" ("Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* [ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963], 93). As Metzger later points out, this assessment that Origen's "treatment of variant readings is most unsatisfactory" is "from the standpoint of modern textual criticism" (ibid., 94). Unfortunately, it is the judging of Origen by later standards that has caused him so much trouble over the centuries. Evaluated in terms of the standards of his own day, however, Origen was a more practiced and knowledgeable analyst of the NT text than any who came before and most who have come since. In a later article, Metzger does seem to be a bit milder in his judgment and says of Origen that "there was no greater textual scholar in the early Church" ("Practice of Textual Criticism," 343).

in our copies, whether by the carelessness of certain scribes, or by some culpable rashness in the correction of the text, or by some people making arbitrary additions or omissions in their corrections."[6] In the Latin version of this commentary, Origen remarks shortly after this that he did not dare to attempt an edition of the NT comparable to the Hexapla.[7]

A further look at this passage may shed some light upon Origen's hesitation to engage the NT text in such a comprehensive fashion. Origen refers to the great diversity among the copies and the careless or intentional changes produced by many inadequate scribes. One gets the impression from this description that Origen did not have one solid textual stream available to him but a number of low quality copies.[8] Whereas Origen could consult a number of reliable editions (ἐκδόσεις) of the OT (he refers to his comparison of these editions as a cure for their diversity), for the NT writings he had merely copies (ἀντίγραφοι). Sharing the Alexandrian disapproval of the *koinē* text, popular copies not associated with a respected name or place, Origen may not have considered the available material adequate for creating a proper "edition" of the NT.[9] He does, however, treat variants individually as he encounters them in his commentaries and apologies, and it is here that we may observe his textual analysis at work.

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[6] *Comm. Matt.* 15.14. Translated by R. B. Tollinton (*Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen* [London: SPCK, 1929], 109-10).

[7] Cf. Metzger, "Explicit References," 80 n. 9.

[8] Cf. Günther Zuntz's description of the second-century textual reservoir as popular or even wild and his assertion that no critical edition of the NT could have been available before the time of Origen or he surely would have made use of it (*The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the* Corpus Paulinum [London: British Academy, 1953], 250).

[9] For Origen's approach to the LXX as the *koinē* text of the OT, see the previous chapter.

On a number of occasions, Origen is content merely to mention a variant reading in passing without offering a preference between readings or any further commentary.[10] For example, in his *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen compares the readings of the Synoptic parallels with **Matt 16:20** (§30) and makes sure to note that some copies of Matthew include a variant (ἐπετίμησεν, in place of διεστείλατο) that corresponds to the other Synoptic accounts. Rather than comment on the possible harmonization by a scribe, he simply mentions the variant in his comparison and continues with his exegesis.[11] Similarly, later in the same commentary Origen is again comparing Synoptic accounts and this time mentions a variant in **Luke 9:48** (§67; ἔσται), differing only in verb tense (from ἐστι), but sees no need to comment further on this reading.[12] Again, at **Matt 21:5** (§33), Origen is comparing texts, this time an OT quotation; he notes the citation of Zech 9:9 in both Matthew and John (12:15) and mentions the variation in Matthew, then continues his discussion of the meaning of Zech 9:9 in the NT context.[13] In a sense, these examples are a parallel of the work Origen did in the Hexapla: presenting contrasting versions side by side for the use of his audience. In such cases, our only clue to Origen's preferred reading is the text he cites most frequently throughout

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[10] Besides the examples noted below, see **Matt 18:1** (§31); **Mark 3:18** (§50); **John 1:4** (§77); **Rom 16:25-27** (§120) (catenae: **Matt 5:32** [§12]; **6:1** [§15]; **Luke 14:19** [§69]—due to the problems of attributing authorship among the catenae, and their lack of a full context, these texts will be treated only as secondary data here.)

[11] Many of the texts cited here are also discussed by Metzger ("Explicit References") and Frank Pack ("The Methodology of Origen as a Textual Critic in Arriving at the Text of the New Testament" [Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1948]). On Matt 16:20, see Metzger, "Explicit References," 83-84; Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 129.

[12] Metzger, "Explicit References," 86; Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 136.

[13] Metzger, "Explicit References," 84.

the discussion, but he offers no criteria for his preference (and it may be simply a matter of preferring to follow his lemma).

In other instances, however, Origen goes one step further and not only mentions the variant but offers an exegesis for each reading—without showing a preference between readings.[14] One of the most notable examples of this in his NT citations is **Heb 2:9**.[15] In his *Commentary on John* (§177), Origen is discussing the relationship of Jesus to creation, here adducing Heb 2:9 to point out that Christ died for everyone except God (χωρὶς θεοῦ). He notes the variant (χάριτι θεοῦ) and goes on to explain how that proves the same point, because if God is bestowing the grace, then he cannot be the recipient of it. Later in the same commentary (§178), he returns to the variant, but only in passing, again not directly expressing a preference between the two. Likewise, in the *Commentary on Romans*, there are a number of examples of the same pattern.[16] At **Rom 8:22** (§110), Origen first mentions the variant "suffers birth pangs" (parturit [ὀδύνει], in place of "suffers grief" [condolet, συνωδίνει]) then later returns to the passage and explains the alternative reading, that earth is suffering labor for those brought forth into salvation.[17] One instance in particular, though, perfectly exemplifies that Origen felt no

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[14] Further examples in the catenae: **Matt 4:17** (§3); **Mark 2:14** (§49). For a similar practice in his OT exegesis, see the previous chapter.

[15] For instance, see P. Garnet, "Hebrews 2:9: ΧΑΡΙΤΙ or ΧΩΡΙΣ?" *StPatr* 18.1 (1985): 321-24. Cf. Metzger, "Explicit References," 91; idem, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 342-43; Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 143.

[16] Because this commentary is extant in full only in its Latin translation, and because the translator, Rufinus, was both knowledgeable in textual matters and comfortable adapting the text for his own audience, citations from this commentary should be used with scrutiny. In the examples cited here, there is less evidence of Rufinus's intervention (such as references to Latin MSS). Other comments, though, seem most likely to be attributed to Rufinus and are included with his evidence in the next chapter.

[17] As with all such mentions of variants in Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, it is possible that it belongs to the translator, Rufinus. There is no mention of the Latin MSS or other clue that this is an

discomfort with opposing variants within the text: at **Rom 5:14** (§106), after discussing the phrase "those who sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression" at length, he notes that there is a variant that reads, "those who did *not* sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression." Despite the fact that the negative by nature is directly contradictory to the statement that Origen has been explicating, he has no problem accepting the possibility of this text and offers an interpretation for it as well.[18]

Origen does not always refrain from choosing between variants, however; on the contrary, there are a number of times when he offers a very strong opinion and explains fully his reasoning. On the basis of such examples, Frank Pack has enumerated five categories of criteria for "correction or preference": (1) dogmatic concerns; (2) geography; (3) harmonization; (4) the majority of the MSS; and (5) etymology.[19] To the list, Metzger would add a sixth category: exegetical grounds.[20] Notably, only one of these categories relates to external evidence (the MS tradition), but in light of Origen's

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interpolation, and the pattern agrees with Origen. However, the fact that the variant is rare and the evidence for it is primarily Western leans in favor of Rufinus. The ambiguous attribution may be why both Metzger and Pack overlook this example, but it is also passed over by Thomas Scheck, who usually comments on whether each instance should be attributed to Origen or Rufinus (as a footnote in his translation; see *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [2 vols.; FC 103, 104; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001-2]). C. P. Hammond Bammel determines that Origen may simply have been commenting on various meanings for the same verb, which Rufinus used as an occasion to mention a variant he knew from the Latin (*Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung* [AGLB 10; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1985], 223-25).

[18] Metzger, "Explicit References," 89; Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 142. One other example from the *Commentary on Romans* should be noted here, but with the caveat mentioned above, that this is a possible interpolation by Rufinus (contra Pack, who states definitively, "The citation of variation made on Romans 3:5 is certainly not made by Origen" ["Methodology of Origen," 141-42]; while Rufinus's hand is clearly involved because of the mention of the Latin MSS, the original reference to a variant at this point very possibly stems from Origen himself, as corroborated by the marginal note in MS 1739). At **Rom 3:5** (§100), Origen explicates the reading "inflicting wrath upon humans" (κατὰ ἀνθρώπων) but notes a variant that reads, "I say this according to humans" (κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω) and explains that Paul is asserting that this is said not according to God's wisdom but is in line with the statement of the previous verse that every person is a liar. Cf. Metzger, "Explicit References," 88-89.

[19] F. Pack, "Origen's Evaluation of Textual Variants in the Greek Bible," *ResQ* 4 (1960): 143-45.

[20] Metzger, "Explicit References," 94.

poor opinion of the MSS available to him, this should perhaps not be surprising.[21] Evaluating this list of criteria and evidence adduced will provide a helpful starting point in examining Origen's textual standards, and the inherent problems in drawing conclusions based on the current state of the patristic materials.

(1) *Dogmatic concerns*. Pack lists two examples, one of which is **Luke 23:45** (§76).[22] In the *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen is again comparing the Synoptics and relates that only in Luke is there a mention of an eclipse at the crucifixion, and only in some copies. He notes that the majority of manuscripts (pleraque exemplaria) state merely that the sun went dark (καὶ ἐσκοτίσθη ὁ ἥλιος), but a few others (in quibusdam autem exemplariis) explain instead that there was an eclipse (τοῦ ἡλίου ἐκλιπόντος). This change he considers intentional, either to make the text more explicit, or as an attack against Scripture by explaining away a supernatural event with a logical alternative. Here we see a combination of external and internal evidence at work, although the weight of the Synoptic parallels is of equal value to the MS evidence for Origen. Since the variant is rare, in contradiction to Matthew and Mark, and unnecessary if not problematic to the text, Origen prefers to explain this as a deliberate change on the part of the heretics.

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[21] Metzger briefly touches on this issue of Origen's MSS, stating that unlike with the Hebrew OT, Origen did not have a reliable "original" to refer back to and so preferred not to pass judgment on most variants. In those instances where Origen does pass judgment, however, Metzger (unlike Pack's systematic listing) generally refers to his criteria as deriving from "more or less inconsequential and irrelevant considerations" ("Explicit References," 93-94).

[22] Pack, "Origen's Evaluation," 143-44; cf. idem, "Methodology of Origen," 137-38; Metzger, "Explicit References," 86-87.

The other example cited by Pack, and similarly noted by Metzger, **Matt 27:17** (§46), is a bit more problematic.[23] On the positive side, the portion of text in question occurs both in the full Latin translation (the original Greek is no longer extant) and in a Greek catena. Unfortunately, though, the texts differ on some key points (see further below, #4), and the scholion has been attributed to a number of different authors.[24] In the Latin, Origen states that many manuscripts (in multis exemplaribus) do not refer to Barabbas as "Jesus"; he agrees with this omission (et forsitan recte) on the grounds that such a sinner could not be called by this name. The Greek scholion, however, does not include this opinion. While Origen does not assign this variant to a heretic, the charge is implicit in his statement, that someone intended to disparage Jesus through this identification. As with Irenaeus, this concern for orthodox copying is also evident in Origen's works, especially in his attacks against Heracleon.[25] Both Irenaeus and Origen thus perceived that the fluidity of the text was in part due to intentional changes by the heterodox, so that their textual acuity was necessary to the defense of orthodoxy, to prevent others from falling into the same errors.

(2) *Geography* and (5) *etymology*. Although these two categories are logically separate, they are combined in the only two examples and so will be addressed together

[23] Pack, "Origen's Evaluation," 143; Metzger, "Explicit References," 84-85; cf. Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 132-33.

[24] See especially B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 56, for a description of the MSS in which the catena occurs and the history of its attribution. I agree with Metzger that Origen is likely the ultimate source of the quotation, but the exact wording of that original statement may be different from what is preserved in the catena.

[25] For example, *Comm. on John* II.8; cf. Pack, "Methodology of Origen," 147-48. On Origen and Heracleon, see B. D. Ehrman, "Heracleon, Origen, and the Text of the Fourth Gospel," *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993): 105-18.

here.[26] In his *Commentary on John*, Origen discusses the variant at **John 1:28** (§80) of the location where John baptized, whether in Bethany or Bethabara. Origen notes first the MS evidence, that nearly all copies (σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις), as well as Heracleon, contain "Bethany." But based on internal evidence, the intrinsic probability that John would know the correct geography, Origen prefers the reading "Bethabara." He argues based on his own experience traveling in the region that Bethany is too far away from the Jordan River to be the correct location, but that Bethabara is said to be along the Jordan. Moreover, according to Origen, the name "Bethabara" means "house of preparation," which corresponds to John's purpose in baptizing, whereas "Bethany" means "house of obedience." Together, the proper geography and etymology make Bethabara the logical choice.

From this discussion, Origen continues on to point out that the Greek copies are unreliable in their transmission of Palestinian places and names, referring both to the Old and New Testaments. As proof, Origen notes **Matt 8:28 parr.** (§21), where three different names appear for the home of the demoniac.[27] He argues first against Gerasa, as though this is the primary reading; in the Gospel account, the pigs are driven off a cliff into water, but Origen notes that Gerasa is not located near water, and that the evangelists would not have made such an egregious error. Next, he notes a variant reading that

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[26] Pack, "Origen's Evaluation," 144-45; cf. idem, "Methodology of Origen," 140-41, 128; Metzger, "Explicit References," 87-88, 82-83; idem, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 342. See further M.-J. Lagrange, "Origène, la critique textuelle et la tradition topographique," *RB* 4 (1895): 501-24; R. G. Clapp, "A Study of the Place-Names Gergesa and Bethabara," *JBL* 26 (1907): 62-83; F. C. Burkitt, "Gergesa—A Reply," *JBL* 27 (1908): 128-33; J. M. Bover, "Dos casos de toponimía y de crítica textual," *Sefarad* 12 (1952): 271-82.

[27] Although Origen does mention Greek MSS here, he does not specify variants in a particular Gospel, so it is possible that he is merely discussing the variation between the Synoptics. Origen, however, would not have distinguished between these two options: he expected harmony in the scriptural witness and, as we see here, had the utmost faith in the accuracy of the evangelists, so he would not have accepted different original readings for each of the Gospels, as our modern critical editions do.

indicates Gadara; while this town is near water, there are no nearby cliffs. There is yet another variant, Gergesa, which has both a lake and a cliff. Moreover, the name "Gergesa" means those who cast out, which refers to how the inhabitants treated Jesus. In the cases from both John and the Synoptics, therefore, geography isolates the proper location, and etymology confirms it. In this latter instance, we see part of Origen's reasoning behind this: he puts great faith in the knowledge and reliability of the evangelists, so only a geographically correct reading could be authentic. Beyond this, he also puts faith in the divine authorship, which yields a spiritual meaning behind the names.

(3) *Harmonization*. Even more than the previous examples, the texts discussed here show Origen's high regard for the biblical writers and his belief that subsequent hands have intentionally altered the text. The first example Pack offers is Origen's explication of **Matt 19:19** (§32), where Origen is not actually discussing a variant but speculating on changes to the text.[28] As with Luke 23:45, here Origen compares the Synoptic versions and notes that Mark (10:19) and Luke (18:20) do not include "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Based on this and the argument that if the rich young man had actually fulfilled this commandment, he would not have been lacking in anything, as Jesus said he was, Origen determines that this clause was not original to Matthew but was ignorantly added by a later hand (ἀλλ' ὑπό τινος τὴν ἀκρίβειαν μὴ

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[28] Pack, "Origen's Evaluation," 145; idem, "Methodology of Origen," 130-31. The second example adduced by Pack is also not a discussion of a variant but rather an argument from silence. In *Contra Celsum* VI.36, Origen asserts that in none of the Gospels is Jesus called a carpenter. Thus, Pack and others argue that Origen is showing preference for (or knowledge exclusively of) the variant at Mark 6:3, τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός. Pack states that Origen prefers this reading based on the Synoptic parallels ("Origen's Evaluation," 145). Cf. Metzger, "Explicit References," 93, who prefers the argument that Pack rejects, namely that Origen simply had a memory lapse here.

νοήσαντος τῶν λεγομένων προστεθεῖσθαι).[29] Origen's main concern here is what actually took place, not merely what the Gospels recorded: if this commandment had actually been spoken, Mark and Luke would not have omitted it, unless Matthew is referring to a similar but separate incident. Origen therefore trusts the evangelists to be accurate in their transmission of Jesus's words and deeds, so that variations between their accounts are just as significant as variants between the copies of a single Gospel. This leads into Origen's enlightening discussion of the NT MSS and his work on the Hexapla (quoted above). He acknowledges that it would be irreverent to claim that such a line was not authentic to Matthew, were it not for the great diversity present among the MSS.

Another example of proposing a variant reading based on Synoptic comparison is **Matt 26:63//Mark 14:61** (§40).[30] Origen notes the variation in the question Pilate asks Jesus (whether he is the son of God or the son of the Blessed One) and suggests that the difference is due to a blunder in the manuscripts (nescio si non mendum habeant exemplaria). Again, he treats the different Gospels as though separate witnesses to the same text, his primary concern being authentic transmission of the actual event itself. A similar phenomenon to the Synoptic comparisons can be found in Origen's analysis of Ps 118:25 and its quotation in **Matt 21:9** (§34). Since Origen trusts Matthew to quote the OT text faithfully, he must explain the divergence between the two and does so by asserting that Matthew had originally quoted from the Hebrew, but through transmission

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[29] Although Origen's subsequent discussion of the MSS firmly places his statement within the realm of textual criticism, what he is engaging in here sounds very much like modern redaction criticism and illustrates the fine line between the two disciplines, which often is dependent merely upon whether a conjectured alteration is attested in the MS tradition or not. This distinction is even more blurred when examining the fluidity of the texts at Qumran, exemplified by what Eugene Ulrich describes as "creative scribes" (see Chap. 1).

[30] Metzger, "Explicit References," 92; idem, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 346.

by ignorant scribes, the text became corrupted.[31] Origen also shows great faith in Paul's quotation of Scripture: at **Rom 4:3** (§102), Origen points out that in Gen 15:6 (the text being quoted by Paul), Abraham is still referred to as Abram. Origen expects that Paul was fully aware of this fact and therefore quoted the text accurately, that "Abram" believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Since none of the MSS of Romans contain this variant, Origen determines that this is an error perpetrated by Gentile copyists who did not realize the difference.[32] In all of these examples, we see that Origen feels free to suggest mistakes, deliberate or accidental, by the scribes when there is a discrepancy between sacred writings, highlighting his high regard for the biblical writers and lack of trust in the accuracy of copyists.

(4) *Majority of the manuscripts.* The best example Pack cites for Origen appealing to the majority of MSS is Luke 23:45, discussed above (#1).[33] As we saw there, however, Origen is equally interested in the testimony of the Synoptic Gospels (and the possible dogmatic reasons for changing the text). In light of the examples in #3, it seems that the other Gospels hold greater weight for Origen than the bulk of the MSS.

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[31] Metzger, "Explicit References," 92; cf. R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (1959; repr. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 177. In his *Commentary on Psalms* 8, Origen refers to the same passage (**Matt 21:9, 15** [§35]) and implies that he knows MSS that have "son of David" (the text in all extant MSS of Matthew) in one verse and "house of David" in the other (both quoting Ps 118:25). Origen then suggests that the Gospel is in error here; while Metzger allows, based on Origen's ambiguous wording, that he could be attributing the error to Matthew himself ("Explicit References," 92), it seems more likely, since (1) Origen refers to the Gospel rather than the evangelist (ἡμάρτηται τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον γραφικῶς) and (2) elsewhere (including the example above on Matt 21:9) Origen tends to put great faith in the accuracy of the evangelists, that Origen is once again assigning fault to the scribes.

[32] This assessment is an amalgamation of the Latin translation and Greek catena of this text, which differ considerably in wording but contain the same point: the Latin mentions that it is an error in the MSS, while the Greek speculates that Gentile copyists changed Paul's text.

[33] Pack, "Origen's Evaluation," 145. The other example Pack gives is Mark 6:3 (see note above), arguing that Origen was relying on church tradition (and therefore, the majority reading in the church). Again, however, this is an argument from silence and depends upon Origen choosing a variant that he doesn't explicitly attest.

In fact, his discussion of John 1:28 (above, #2) is a perfect example of how little weight the MSS had. Origen explicitly states there that he is well aware that the majority of the copies read “Bethany,” but based on internal evidence alone, he prefers the minority reading. Most of the time, Origen does not point out the number or quality of MSS behind a reading, instead mentioning only that “some copies” have this, or “other copies” read that.[34] Based on this, while it can be determined that Origen was well aware of the MSS and their readings, external evidence alone could not sway him and could even be outweighed by internal evidence.

(See #2 above for #5.)

(6) *Exegetical grounds.* In addition to the five criteria listed by Pack, Metzger mentions one example of Origen preferring a reading for exegetical reasons.[35] At **Rom 7:6** (§107), Origen comments that alongside the text he has explicated (“we were discharged from the law, having died [ἀποθανόντες]”), there is a variant that reads, “we were discharged from the law of death [τοῦ θανάτου]”; but the first reading, he determines, is both truer and more correct (et verius est et rectius). Since such a statement is not common to Origen, it should be cautioned that this assessment possibly belongs to his translator, Rufinus. Either way, no further reasoning is offered for why this reading is more correct. It is notable, however, that Origen does not offer an

[34] The most common phrases used by Origen are ἔν τισι (ἀντιγράφοις) and κατά τινα τῶν ἀντιγράφων (and, in Latin: in nonnullis exemplaribus; in quibusdam autem exemplariis). Other similar variations he uses include: ἐν ἄλλοις (ἀντιγράφοις); ἐν ἑτέροις (ἀντιγράφοις); ἐν τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις (see also: in aliis exemplaribus). More rarely, Origen refers to the bulk of the MSS: ἐν πολλοῖς (in multis exemplariis/exemplaribus); and σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις (see John 1:28, above, where Origen ruled *against* “nearly all the copies”; Latin: secundum pleraque exemplaria). The one reference to παλαιοῖς πάνυ ἀντιγράφοις is in the catena for Matt 27:17; the uniqueness of this phrase makes attribution to Origen even more dubious.

[35] Metzger, “Explicit References,” 89, 94; he does not expound on what he means by “exegetical grounds.”

alternate exegesis, as he is known to do on other occasions. One more example can perhaps be located in this category: at **Matt 5:45** (§14), after quoting the text as known today (and, apparently, to Origen) in all the MSS, Origen speculates based on its meaning in the context that "your" is an error in the MSS so that the text should read simply "*the* father in heaven."[36] As seen in the examples of harmonization above (#3), Origen feels free to suggest a corruption in the MS tradition, although this example is even more blatantly a conjectural emendation since the suggestion is based on internal (exegetical, or intrinsic probability) rather than external (Synoptic) evidence.

The examination of this evidence and the list of criteria shows that it is not so easy to lay out a detailed list of standards by which Origen weighs the NT MSS. The most clear-cut evidence is his appeal to geography and etymology and the value he places on judging readings based on comparable texts in the Gospels or OT (whether harmonizing parallels or exegeting based on similar teachings).[37] Together, these examples show that in dealing with the NT Origen, in contrast to his work on the OT, placed great weight on the internal evidence, due mainly to his distrust of unknown scribes and thus the copies in circulation. This becomes most blatant in the one example where Origen explicitly argues against the majority of MSS based on internal evidence (and, in the same passage, expresses that the Greek MSS can not be trusted in the matter of geography and place names; see John 1:28, above). Moreover, while Origen

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[36] Metzger, "Explicit References," 91-92. Also, among the catenae, see **Matt 5:22** (§10); **John 3:34** (§82) (both instances argue against the variant based on other scriptural teachings).

[37] Cf. the subjective and objective internal criteria E. G. Turner lists among the Alexandrians, some of which can also be identified in Origen's work: for example, readings that are illogical (compared to Origen's exegetical arguments that certain variants must be false in light of other scriptural truths), and arguments from geography (*Greek Papyri: An Introduction* [1968; repr., Oxford: Clarendon, 1980], 110-11).

considered the Hebrew text to be the "original text," there was nothing comparable for the NT, and so there was no final authority to which to appeal.[38] Another point of divergence between the Hexapla and Origen's approach to the NT is the purpose for his work. The comprehensive OT synopsis was needed for apologetic reasons; there was no such need for the NT. While Origen did have to defend the text of the NT against heretics and pagans, this could be dealt with on a case by case basis and was not monumental enough to require a comparative edition of the NT.

One significant point of similarity between Origen's work on the OT and NT, however, is his understanding of the *oikonomia* of Scripture: the Synoptics have the same authority as separate "editions" of the same text, and readings may be judged based on their coherence with other scriptural teachings. This is a further illustration of the Alexandrian strategy of judging the text by its own merits (interpreting Homer by means of Homer, or, here, interpreting Scripture by means of Scripture).[39] This, along with his tendency for both the OT and the NT to offer explication for multiple variants without deciding between them, shows that Origen's ultimate goal for his textual work was exegetical. When he did make a judgment between readings, it was often in the interest of keeping the reader from falling into error; however, when both readings could be used to prove the same theological point, there was no need to choose one over the other. In

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[38] This issue of the "original text" referring to the original language rather than an autograph copy will also become apparent with Jerome (dealing with the Latin vs. the Greek). With both fathers, it seems that they were most concerned about comparing MSS when dealing with a translation. While they were also aware of divergence among the Greek NT MSS, that was a minor issue in comparison and only glossed over in the commentaries—not a basis for undertaking a new, authoritative revision of the Greek text.

[39] For more on how Origen applies these principles to the OT, see the previous chapter.

comparison with many scholars who followed, it is clear that Origen was the textual analyst *par excellence* among the Greek fathers.

3. Eusebius

While Eusebius was actively involved in preserving and disseminating Origen's scholarly work on the OT through the Hexaplaric recension, he did not follow quite so avidly in the footsteps of Origen's NT textual analysis. In fact, some of the handful of examples where Eusebius comments on NT variants actually relate to the OT text. In **Matt 13:35** (§26), Eusebius is concerned about the confusion wrought by some copies quoting Ps 77:2 (LXX) with the formula, "spoken through the prophet Isaiah." Eusebius is quick to point out that the quotation appears in the Psalms, not in Isaiah, and so "the more accurate copies" (ἐν δέ γε τοῖς ἀκριβέσιν ἀντιγράφοις) of Matthew read only, "spoken through the prophet." Likewise, at **Matt 27:9** (§42), Eusebius notes that the quotation attributed to Jeremiah is actually from Zechariah. Although he does not mention knowledge of specific variants in Matthew, Eusebius does speculate on reasons for the inaccuracy, placing the burden on the scribes: he suggests that either an error (σφάλμα γραφικόν) was made in Jeremiah, omitting this quotation from the text, or in Matthew, writing "Jeremiah" instead of "Zechariah."[40] While not explicitly stating, as Origen does, that the evangelist would not be in error when quoting Scripture, this is implied. Note also that Eusebius is concerned about the accuracy of the text, not the most

[40] In the supplement to the *Quaestiones ad Marinum*, Eusebius is cited as having made a similar comment about **Mark 1:2** (§48), that the introduction of the Malachi quotation as by Isaiah is a scribal error (γραφέως τοίνυν ἐστὶ σφάλμα).

difficult reading or what may have been written in an autograph copy (although, he would expect the autograph to be accurate in citing Scripture).

In a similar manner, Eusebius expects accuracy in the transmission of events by all four evangelists, and therefore he, like Origen, judges the correctness of individual readings against the testimony of the other Gospels. Eusebius notes that Mark 15:25 and **John 19:14** (§ 94) differ regarding the hour that Jesus was crucified (third and sixth, respectively). Since the Greek characters for the two numerals are similar in shape (gamma [Γ] vs. episemon [Ϛ]), Eusebius speculates that scribes confused the two symbols, and so John originally read "the third hour" but was changed to "the sixth hour" through scribal error (γραφικὸν εἶναι τοῦτο σφάλμα).[41] This determination is based also on the testimony of the other Synoptics that darkness descended at the sixth hour (Mark 15:33 parr.), and so Eusebius uses a combination of harmonization and appeal to scribal inaccuracy to conjecture an emendation for John. In all the above examples, Eusebius uses a similar tactic to Origen, depending on internal evidence rather than citing the bulk or authority of the MSS, once again using Scripture as the final authority for determining the most accurate reading.

At one point, however, Eusebius does make a significant appeal to external evidence. For the ending of **Mark** (**16:9ff.**; §55), Eusebius explains that in nearly all the copies (σχεδὸν ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις), and in the most accurate copies (τὰ γοῦν ἀκριβῆ τῶν ἀντιγράφων), the Gospel ends with v. 8. The verses that follow, therefore, are superfluous (περιττά) and should be judged by comparison with the other

[41] This interpretation was not unique to Eusebius but was a church tradition (see next chapter); cf. Metzger, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 346-47. Both Mark and John have variants including both numbers, but Eusebius does not appeal to any MS evidence in his argument.

Gospels. Eusebius continues on to make the interesting point that some are hesitant to reject anything in the text and therefore hold both versions as received tradition, neither superior to the other.[42] Although this sounds like a negative statement, Eusebius himself also addresses **Mark 16:9** (§56) as though it has merit in the text[43]—perhaps not unlike modern critical editions and translations that bracket the alternate endings to Mark but are loath to remove them entirely since they are considered scriptural by so many in the church. Thus, while external evidence does hold great weight for Eusebius as a scholar (along with the accuracy of the witnesses, although he offers no explanation of his criteria here for determining "accuracy"), church tradition cannot be overlooked. This tension between scholarship and tradition pervaded the work of Origen as well, and other scholars to follow, and continues to be of concern to many today.

4. Didymus

Like Origen before him, Didymus was trained and active in Alexandrian education. It should be no surprise, then, to find some similarities in their approach to the text.[44] One example is in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, where Didymus uses the pastoral example from **Titus 3:10** (§172) to explicate Ps 38:10 LXX (39:9 Eng). The psalm advises to be silent and not open your mouth; Didymus applies this to the context

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[42] Metzger, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 343-44.

[43] Eusebius is comparing the resurrection accounts and includes the evidence from Mark about Mary Magdalene, "according to some copies" (κατά τινα τῶν ἀντιγράφων).

[44] See the discussion of Didymus with the Alexandrian scholars in Chapter 1 (section 2.6). Origen was clearly much more rigorous and exacting in his textual analysis on the OT than was Didymus, but Origen's freer and more sporadic use of variants in the NT do have more in common with Didymus's style, especially regarding the presentation of variants without deciding between them, or as two options for understanding the meaning of the text. In that sense, their similarity is more on the level of exegesis than textual analysis.

in Titus, which instructs that a contentious person should be avoided (that is, one should not even open his or her mouth to speak to this person) after a warning—or, as some manuscripts read (ἔνια γὰρ τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἔχει), after a second warning. As seen in many examples from Origen, Didymus does not choose between the variants, nor does he offer any criteria for evaluation. The primary concern here is the exegesis, and the meaning of the psalm can be conveyed plainly through either variant.[45] In another text, Didymus similarly is using a NT citation to explicate an OT passage. In his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, Didymus uses the *pericope adulterae* (**John 7:53-8:11**; §85), which he says is present in certain (copies of the?) Gospels (ἔν τισιν εὐαγγελίοις), to illustrate the statement that even if a servant has cursed a master, the master is not innocent of having wronged others.[46] While Didymus offers no opinion on the authenticity of the passage, he feels free to cite it as though it is authoritative Scripture.

In another instance, however, Didymus does show a preference for a variant, using internal criteria. Commenting on **1 Cor 15:51** (§130), Didymus prefers the reading "we will not all be changed" based first of all on other scriptural testimony: he cites Matt 13:43, which describes only the righteous being changed. Second, and decisively, he judges the variant based on the immediate context: the following verse (1 Cor 15:52) states, "*we ourselves* will be changed" but this qualified statement would not be logical or

[45] Didymus notes another variation in some manuscripts (ἔν τισιν ἀντιγράφοις) in a scholion for **2 Cor 1:1** (§135), but since he does not cite the actual variant and there is no clear extant variant here, it is difficult to tell what variant he is attesting. However, in this brief passage, he appears to be using the variant as evidence for an exegetical argument, rather than vice versa. Also, in Jerome's quotation of Didymus's comments on 1 Cor 15:51, he continues with a discussion of **1 Cor 15:52** (§134). There is a mixture of Didymus's commentary and Jerome's own insertions in this passage, so it is not entirely clear which part of the discussion belongs to Didymus. However, it does appear that Didymus notes a variant and uses the alternate reading to help further explicate his lemma.

[46] For more on Didymus's textual witness to the Gospels, see B. D. Ehrman, *Didymus the Blind and the Text of the Gospels* (SBLNTGF 1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986). Ehrman cites this passage but offers no further commentary or comparison of variants (p. 145).

necessary if Paul had just said that everyone will be changed. The external evidence does not factor into Didymus's discussion (other than to mention this appears in one or more MSS)[47]; his judgment is based entirely on the internal coherence of Scripture and of the context in Paul.

5. Diodore of Tarsus

In contrast to the Alexandrian scholars, Diodore represents the scholarship that was beginning to flourish in Antioch. His extant works are limited, but we do have one example from his *Commentary on Psalms* of where he discusses a NT variant. In his exposition on Psalm 8, Diodore quotes **Heb 2:9** (§174), where the psalm is interpreted in light of Jesus. While Diodore's lemma reads "apart from God" (χωρὶς θεοῦ), he mentions that some copies of the apostle's writings have "by the grace of God" (ὥς ἔνια τῶν ἀποστολικῶν ἔχει . . . χάριτι θεοῦ). Diodore does not voice a preference between the two, simply explaining how both have essentially the same meaning (that if God is the one giving the grace, then he is necessarily an exception, so that what occurs is "except for God"). He does further suggest that the best reading is the one that does the most justice to the text, although he does not explicitly say which reading that is (although his lemma may be implied). Diodore therefore uses internal evidence, the style and context, without offering an assessment of the external evidence.

[47] In the Greek scholion, the reference is singular (τινα ἑτέραν . . . γραφήν), but the quotation by Jerome has the plural (in nonnullis codicibus).

6. Epiphanius

On a few occasions, Epiphanius, like Origen before him, merely notes a variant in passing without further explanation. Two of these examples especially stand out because they are variants for which Origen argued at length about the more accurate reading. At **Matt 8:28 parr.** (§20), Epiphanius lists the different location for the demoniac in each Gospel, along with a variant in Matthew that agrees with Luke. However, Epiphanius neither offers any judgment about the variant in Matthew, nor does he show any discomfort that all three Synoptics should have different readings here. Yet, in his explanation of this discrepancy, he still manages to harmonize the readings: the actual location was in the middle of the three places named by the evangelists. Also, at **John 1:28** (§79), Epiphanius cites Bethabara as the location where John was baptizing, but only notes in passing that other copies (ἐν ἄλλοις ἀντιγράφοις) read "Bethany"; no preference is shown (although "Bethabara" is treated as the primary reading, whether it is the lemma from Epiphanius's copy of John or his preferred reading), nor is it explained whether "Bethany" is the majority reading, as noted by Origen.[48]

A similar example at **Matt 2:11** (§2) is even more curious as it shows further Epiphanius's lack of reference to what one would expect to be the majority reading. Here, he notes in passing that instead of the Magi opening their wallets (τὰς πήρας), some copies state (ὡς ἔχει ἔνια τῶν ἀντιγράφων) that they opened their treasures

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[48] Cf. C. D. Osburn, *The Text of the Apostolos in Epiphanius of Salamis* (SBLNTGF 6; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 232. Along with this example, Osburn notes two other instances under the heading, "Selected Readings upon Which Epiphanius Comments." In the first of these (pp. 232-34), **2 Tim 4:10** (§171), Epiphanius notes that the correct reading is Gaul, rather than Galatia, as (he says) some people think; thus, while he notes a known variant, he does not indicate that he knows of MSS bearing each reading (especially in the context, his wording implies that the incorrect reading is one perpetrated by heretics [either in copies they have edited, or in their teachings on this passage]). The second example (pp. 235-54), 1 Cor 10:9, Epiphanius again does not mention variation in the MSS but rather is commenting on texts that he assumes to have been corrupted by Marcion.

(τοὺς θησαυρούς). This variant is actually the only reading currently extant here among the Greek MSS; while Epiphanius does acknowledge familiarity with this reading, he does not distinguish it as the most common reading. The closest example known today of the primary text cited by Epiphanius is a similar verse from the *Protevangelium of James* 21:11.[49] However, neither reading is important to the context, since Epiphanius is more interested in the gifts that the Magi brought, not how they carried or offered these gifts.[50]

On other occasions, however, Epiphanius is quite vocal about how he believes certain changes appeared in the text. At **Matt 1:11** (§1), Epiphanius is dealing with Matthew's genealogy and the number of generations in each subset. He trusts the evangelist to have been accurate in his numbering, so that the original version of the Gospel must have had fourteen generations in each set (cf. Matt 1:17). Therefore, he believes that the variant where a name is repeated is accurate, since it brings the number up to fourteen; rather than this being accidental duplication in the list, it is representing a son named after his father.[51] The omission, though, Epiphanius finds to be no simple accident. Rather, it was deleted by certain ignorant people through an attempt at textual correction (ὡς κατὰ διόρθωσιν). Here we see echoes of the same negative assessment of διόρθωσις that Eusebius quoted, referring to those who "corrected" the Scriptures

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[49] Καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν οἱ μάγοι ἑστῶτα μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας, ἐξέβαλον ἀπὸ τῆς πήρας αὐτῶν δῶρα χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν.

[50] It is rather interesting, though, that in this context where Epiphanius is arguing against heretical Christian sects, he cites from a text of questionable orthodoxy.

[51] However, Epiphanius's description is slightly different than the commonly known variant here: Epiphanius understands the name Jeconiah to be repeated, whereas the known variant inserts Jehoiakim (Ἰωακιμ) into the list.

(there, the OT) to the point that every copy represented a thoroughly unique text.[52] Epiphanius therefore appeals to internal criteria (authorial intention and the integrity of the Gospel) as his standard by which to judge the variant.

Elsewhere, Epiphanius refers to "uncorrected copies" (ἐν τοῖς ἀδιορθώτοις ἀντιγράφοις) in a positive sense, again casting a disparaging light on textual correction. In defense of Jesus's humanity, Epiphanius paraphrases **Luke 22:43-44** (§73) and notes that it is present in the unaltered copies, or those which have not been subjected to διόρθωσις. He attributes the alteration not to the heretics but to the orthodox as an attempt to defend Jesus from weakness. While he does not state explicitly here that it was a correction made from ignorance (as with the previous example), he does imply as much and points out, along with a reference to Irenaeus before him, that the text is actually positive in emphasizing Jesus's human nature. Here, then, Epiphanius uses an internal criterion of orthodoxy, and an external criterion of Irenaeus's evidence, to argue for the authenticity of the variant.

Another informative example where Epiphanius discerns between variants is at **John 19:14** (§93) regarding the hour of the crucifixion and the discrepancy between John and Mark. He refers to the third hour as the accurate interpretation (τὴν ἀκριβῆ . . . εἰσήγησιν) of both Mark and John, noting that some copies of John have the sixth hour as the result of a scribal error (γραφικοῦ . . . σφάλματος). Of particular interest, moreover, is Epiphanius's further explanation that the discussion of this variant is a

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[52] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*., 5.28.15-17; quoted in Chapter 1, above.

tradition passed down by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius.[53] This point is evident in the fact that Epiphanius essentially paraphrases Eusebius's discussion of the same variant, particularly the description of the variant being due to the scribe mistaking the character for three (gamma) as a six (episemon). Epiphanius's comment thus provides insight into what may have been a common practice among the fathers when dealing with variants, and may be behind several of the variants only mentioned in passing by particular fathers.[54]

So, while Epiphanius determines the veracity of the reading in John 19:14 based on harmonization and the conjecture of a scribal error, there is no evidence that he had seen MSS with such a variant rather than merely reproducing the argument passed down to him by preceding generations. It is equally possible that Epiphanius acquired knowledge of other variants, such as Matt 8:28 and John 1:28, from scholars such as Origen, while other discussions seem to be based on something other than careful study of the text (e.g., Luke 22:43-44, where he appears to conflate this text with Luke 19:41). Epiphanius does not always feel the need to discern between readings, but when he does, it is often in the interest of preserving the text against heretical or ignorant corruptions, some of which may be due to a misguided attempt to "correct" the text. He thus relies

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[53] See above for Eusebius (and the discussion of John 19:14 in Chap. 4). The discussions by Clement and Origen are no longer extant. Karl Holl suggests that Clement's discussion would have been found in his treatise on Easter (mentioned by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.13.9; K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte* [Tübingen: J.C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1928], 2:206). If Epiphanius is accurate in tracing this discussion back to Clement, this is significant since we have no other extant discussions of variants by Clement. There is also a catena on this passage attributed to Ammonius, but one wonders if perhaps the tradition represented by the catena cannot be traced back to Origen, in part or in whole.

[54] See Chapter 4, where examination of variants discussed by multiple fathers will make the similarities in their discussions (and, therefore, the dependence between them) more apparent.

more upon internal than external criteria, although he also appeals to the testimony of previous fathers as part of his external support.

7. Basil

At **Luke 22:36** (§71), Basil exhibits once more the principle that internal evidence often supersedes external, even when the majority of MSS support a particular reading. He quotes the text as using the imperative: "let the one who has a purse take it"; in passing, he notes that the majority of copies (τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) instead have the future tense ("the one who has a purse will take it"). However, this does not deter Basil from retaining the minority reading. While he does not specify any reasons for his preference, a criterion of internal coherence can be deduced from his following comments since he goes on to state that this verse is a prophecy rather than a command, just as Scripture often uses imperatives for prophetic statements (citing examples from the Psalms). Thus, by interpreting the Gospel by means of other Scripture, Basil accepts this reading as evidence of his point that the verse is prophetic. The majority reading remains unpersuasive but still is worth noting, as Basil is aware that his audience may have a text that reads differently from his own.[55]

One further example from Basil occurs in his reference to **Eph 1:1** (§143). In a discussion about being, refuting Eunomius, Basil uses a variant from Ephesians as part of his scriptural evidence. He cites the version that omits "in Ephesus" as an existential

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[55] What Basil refers to as the majority reading is now known to us only in D (and is, in fact, so rare a variant that it is not even mentioned in the apparatus of NA[27]). W. K. L. Clarke thus speculates that the Western text was once dominant in Asia Minor but later became replaced by an official (more Alexandrian) text (*The Ascetic Works of St. Basil* [trans. W. K. L. Clarke; London: SPCK, 1925], 322 n. 4). If this is the case, it implies that Basil was, intentionally or unintentionally, contributing to this process.

statement about the saints, those who are in Christ, and comments that this is the reading that has been handed down and is present in the oldest copies (ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς τῶν ἀντιγράφων). While Basil does not cite the other reading (in Ephesus), that is in a sense implied since he does refer to this as appearing in the letter to the Ephesians. He also does not explicitly argue for one reading over the other, but the exegetical usage of the only version he directly quotes, along with the external evidence of the oldest MSS, agree together to show his preference for this reading. In this case, then, he shows more respect for the external evidence (containing an element of ecclesial tradition as well, as the text "handed down" [παραδεδώκασι]), but the exegetical setting (here used polemically) still carries greater significance, since this reading is cited specifically to make a particular exegetical and theological point.

8. John Chrysostom

John Chrysostom is another acclaimed father and exegete who rarely discusses variants in the NT text. However, when he does discuss variants, his style is almost the complete opposite of Origen's, as he tends to state a definite preference for which reading is correct. At **Eph 5:14** (§152), Chrysostom uses for the lemma and discussion the reading "Christ will shine upon you." As he begins the discussion, he first notes the variant "you will touch Christ" as found in some copies, but then after repeating the lemma, he declares that the text is the latter reading (μᾶλλον δὲ τοῦτό ἐστι). Without further comment on the variant or the basis for his decision, he carries on with the exegesis and does not return to the variant. Similarly, at **John 1:28** (§78), Chrysostom merely mentions a variant with limited comment and only in passing. The lemma reads

“Bethany”; when coming to this part of the text, he cites this version but then adds that the more correct manuscripts (τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἀκριβέστερον ἔχει) read “Bethabara.” Here, he does include his criterion for determining the better reading: geography. For, Bethany is not beyond the Jordan, as John states, but closer to Jerusalem. Chrysostom does not elaborate on the location of Bethabara but finds this explanation to be sufficient and continues with his discussion of the chapter without further reference to this text. Thus, the one criterion that Chrysostom does indicate is an internal one, that of geography (or, the accuracy of the reading). If he is in agreement with the other fathers (particularly the Antiochene exegetes) who argue for his preferred reading for the Ephesians reading, then it is also based on internal evidence, the coherence of the immediate context.

9. Isidore

In one of his letters, Isidore is answering a query about **Heb 9:17** (§181) and offers quite a bit of detail about the reading. Where the addressee has shown confusion over the author’s meaning (here, the author of Hebrews is assumed to be Paul), Isidore clarifies that the text should not read “never” (μήποτε) but “not at the time” (μὴ τότε). He explains that this error crept into the text by means of the ignorance of scribes (ὑπό τινων ἴσως ἀμαθῶν) who added a single stroke (altering τ to π) and thus changed the meaning. He reinforces his argument with an appeal to the oldest manuscripts (ἐν παλαιοῖς ἀντιγράφοις).[56] As he continues to discuss the correct interpretation of the

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[56] There is some ambiguity to Isidore’s statement “Thus I have found in the oldest copies.” Since he continues on to repeat the verse with the latter reading, the one he determines is correct, it is a fair

verse, he shows the same confidence in Paul that others have shown in the evangelists, assuming that the apostle would not have confused the meaning of the verse. But, as he concludes, Isidore does allow that the first reading, μήποτε, is possible, so he instructs on how it should be read so as to avoid misinterpretation. Isidore therefore shows a balance of evidence, relying mostly upon the antiquity of the MSS and the logical explanation of how the variant emerged. Like other fathers, he shows a great deal of faith in the scriptural writers contrasted with very little faith in the quality and education of the copyists. In the end, however, Isidore allows the possibility of either variant being valid and so offers interpretation for each.

10. Macarius Magnes

In refutation of an anonymous philosopher's comments on **John 12:31** (§89), Macarius repeats the two phrases used interchangeably by the philosopher, cast out (ἔξω) and cast down (κάτω), and notes that he rightly uses both since both phrases appear in the manuscripts (ὡς ἔχει τινὰ τῶν ἀντιγράφων). Macarius simply mentions the two variants as alternatives, and only in passing without dwelling on the difference or which is to be preferred. The philosopher's chief questions are about the reading "cast out," so Macarius begins by answering these questions, but he also frequently uses the phrase "cast down." For Macarius, however, this preference seems to be exegetically driven, since he emphasizes how the ruler of the world is cast down, while in v. 32 Jesus is lifted up. He therefore does not see the readings as contradictory and uses both phrases to argue for the same basic meaning. Macarius does not return to a discussion of the MSS

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assumption that he is stating this variant is present in the oldest copies. However, it is also possible that he is saying that he found the mistake even in the oldest copies.

or the variants, nor does he explicitly state that one reading is superior to the other; he thus merely exhibits a direct knowledge of the same variants that the philosopher implicitly seems to witness.[57]

11. Socrates

In his history of the church, Socrates mentions one variant, in **1 John 4:3** (§184). He is discussing Nestorius and his lack of proper theological understanding, and here includes Nestorius's oversight of this variant as evidence of his ignorance. Socrates does not explicitly mention both versions (i.e., the reading that Nestorius wrongly adopted), only the "correct" reading, so the reading Socrates is arguing against must be inferred from the MS evidence (all of the Greek evidence reads "does not confess" [μὴ ὁμολογεῖ]). Socrates twice asserts that the reading "every spirit that separates [λύει] Jesus" is found in the oldest manuscripts (ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἀντιγράφοις . . . ἐκ τῶν παλαιῶν ἀντιγράφων). Socrates follows this discussion with a reference to the oldest interpreters, appealing to use of similar wording (λύειν) as evidence to support his preferred reading.

Since he returns to the theme of antiquity repeatedly in the passage, Socrates clearly considers the age of a MS or teaching an important criterion of its authenticity and veracity. He also explains how the incorrect reading arose, namely that those who wished to separate Jesus's humanity from his divinity (in other words, the very people

[57] It is not clear cut whether or not the philosopher is actually aware of a textual variant here. Only once (as quoted by Macarius) does he use the term κάτω (he later uses the verb καταβάλλεται), and it is built into his argument rather than a direct citation of the verse. However, we do know from another passage in the *Apocriticus* (on **Mark 15:34** [§53]) that the philosopher was explicitly aware of textual variants in the Gospels (see below, under Porphyry).

who would be condemned by the reading) removed it from the early copies. Socrates therefore affirms that the correction/corruption (and therefore both readings) happened early in the transmission of the text. Thus, Socrates' sole concern is the antiquity and orthodoxy of the text as it factors into this Christological debate. He relies primarily on external criteria, most explicitly the oldest MSS but also, essentially, the patristic evidence that corroborates the MSS. Implicitly, he also relies on the internal evidence of the reading that accords most with the orthodox teaching.

12. Theodoret

In two examples of mentioning variants, Theodoret refers to the external evidence, although it does not play a crucial role in his distinction between readings. At **Eph 5:14** (§155), Theodoret comments that some of the copies (Ἔνια δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) read "Christ will shine on you" (ἐπιφαύσει σοι), rather than "Christ will touch you" (ἐπιψαύσει σου) from his lemma. Based on internal criteria, Theodoret shows a preference for the variant "Christ will shine on you," due to the mention of light in previous verses. He therefore explicates the variant (and only the variant), although he does not directly state that this reading is superior to the lemma. Commenting on **Rom 16:3**, Theodoret again mentions the external evidence, although his vocabulary makes the issue a little more clouded. Theodoret is discussing Priscilla, and quickly notes that she is also known as Prisca, with an aside that both names are found in the textual tradition (ἀμφότερα γὰρ ἔστιν εὑρεῖν ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις). It is likely that Theodoret is referring to a variant in the MSS of Romans, since there is a known variant in this verse. However, his use of the term "books" (βιβλίοις) rather than "copies" (ἀντιγράφοις)

leaves open the possibility that he is referring to other NT writings, specifically Acts and the Pauline epistles. The Priscilla of Acts 18 is referred to by Paul (cf. 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19) as Prisca. Following this tendency, one would expect Theodoret's copy of Romans to read "Prisca," which he refers to second, as the variant rather than as his lemma. He is therefore either attesting a variant here in the MSS of Romans or suggesting an alternate reading to his MS based on the testimony of other NT books.[58] Regardless of which is the case, Theodoret shows no preference between readings, either on internal or external grounds. Thus, while in both examples Theodoret attests the MS (external) evidence, he does not use it as a deciding factor between variant readings, preferring either to rely on the internal evidence of the larger context or to allow both readings to stand as equal options.

13. Catenae, Quotations, and Fragmentary Writings

The fragments among the catenae and other citations removed from their original contexts are more difficult to attribute to a specific author or verify as authentic and therefore hold only secondary weight when examining the tendencies of individual authors. However, when taken together, these anonymous and dubious citations may still add evidence to the larger issue of which variants were commented upon by the Greek fathers and what evidence they relied upon when deciding between variants.

[58] Theodoret, however, may not have made the same distinction as modern text critics would and consider these two options to be two different categories of criteria. Just as Origen (see above) regarded the corroboration of other Gospels as external evidence equal to the witness of copies of the same Gospel, Theodoret might consider MSS of other Pauline letters to be external evidence of equal weight as other copies of Romans. We cannot know for certain, since Theodoret makes no distinction one way or the other, but the possibility remains.

13.1. Porphyry

In the *Apocriticus* of Macarius Magnes, one reference to variations in the MSS, at **Mark 15:34** (§53), is within a quotation of Macarius's anonymous opponent. A significant problem in the interpretation of Macarius's text has been the identification of this opponent, apparently a Greek philosopher. While a number of suggestions have been made, the most prevalent is Porphyry, or a follower of his.[59] Whoever the exact source, this example shows the interesting case of the mention of a variant by a non-Christian, and specifically as evidence against the veracity of Scripture. The philosopher's purpose in this portion of his argument is to show a number of places where the Gospels contradict one another, especially in the Passion narratives. He thus cites the final words of Jesus from different Gospels; his last two examples are actually variants from Mark.

While the philosopher does not explicitly says that certain "copies" read this, what is especially interesting is that he cites the different Gospels in the same manner as the variants from one Gospel, and side by side. Therefore, he treats the textual variants exactly the same way as Synoptic variations. Unfortunately, we do not know the exact source of the philosopher's information, whether he made a comparison of the Gospel texts himself or received a condensed or harmonized version of the Passion narrative. Either way, this corroborates the tendency sometimes seen in the church fathers to treat variations between Gospels in the same manner as variations between MSS of the same Gospel. In this passage, the philosopher's intent is to point out the contradictions between the accounts, so he does not further discuss the specific variant from Mark. It is

[59] See B. M. Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *Text and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 189 n. 1; T. W. Crafer, *The Apocriticus of Macarius Magnes* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), xv-xvi; R. Goulet, *Macarios de Magnésie: le Monogénès* (2 vols.; Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2003), 1:66-149.

clear, though, that he would not accept an exegesis that argues both readings are equally acceptable; in his argument, if any of these are the historical utterance of Jesus, then they are necessarily mutually exclusive.

13.2. Apollinaris of Laodicea

Many of the scholia, since they are by nature abbreviated, marginal quotations, serve only to note a variant reading in passing without fuller explanation, or simply point to the external evidence attesting a variant. Three scholia attributed to Apollinaris particularly illustrate this. Regarding the instructions of Jesus to his disciples about what they should take with them when he sends them out, this scholion on **Mark 6:8** (§51) shows a Christian use of the Synoptic Gospels that stands in opposition to the example of Macarius's anonymous philosopher (although, the abbreviated nature of the scholion should caution against drawing too firm a conclusion about the author's final analysis of the variations). Apollinaris[60] observes that Matthew and Luke are in agreement that Jesus said they should take neither sandals nor a garment nor a staff for the journey. He then remarks that some copies of Mark (ἔν τισι τῶν ἀντιγράφων), however, do seem to command them to bring a staff and to wear sandals, although other copies (ἐν ἄλλοις) say to bring nothing, including no staff or sandals. While the scholion cuts off here, and therefore we do not know if the author of a longer work originally discerned between the variants, the scholion follows a common pattern of simply laying out the external evidence and presenting the alternative readings.

[60] For sake of convenience and clarity, I will use the names of the authors to whom these scholia are attributed, but with an awareness that authorship among the catenae is always somewhat in question, unless the excerpt can be found within a complete work by that author. The fact that some of these scholia are attributed to different authors in different locations is evidence of this problem.

Another example illustrates the more truncated version of a reference to external evidence that is familiar among such marginal glosses. In a scholion on **Matt 6:1** (§15) attributed to both Apollinaris and Origen, the note reads as a marginal comment, building on the lemma, starting out: "in other (copies) [ἐν ἄλλοις (ἀντιγράφοις)] it says. . . ." However, this is the only comment on the evidence, as the commentator quickly interprets the variant reading "righteousness" as referring to exactly the same thing as the lemma, "alms," and then proceeds to exegete what the verse intends as the purpose of giving alms.[61] A similar case is a scholion for **Matt 4:17** (§3), attributed to both Origen and Cyril of Alexandria. Again, the scholion builds on the lemma, opening simply: "some copies [ἔν τισι] do not have. . . ." The word in question is the imperative "repent" as part of the message and ministry of Jesus. The commentator first says that it is acceptable for Jesus to repeat this message of John the Baptist since both were sent by the same God. But then the commentator offers an explanation for the variant, that if John was sent first to tell people to repent in preparation for Jesus, then if the people obeyed this call, it may not have been necessary for Jesus to again tell them to repent. The author of the scholion therefore shows no preference between the variants but exegetes both.[62]

Another scholion attributed to Apollinaris deals with a text that was under greater debate, the inclusion of "without cause" at **Matt 5:22** (§5). Similar to the previous two

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[61] The two versions of the scholion, attributed to the two different authors, differ here (see the Catalogue for both versions). The version attributed to Origen lacks the phrase οὕτως τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην καλῶν immediately after the variant and simply begins the exegesis with a reference to alms. One can easily see how the longer version may be an elaboration to explain the shorter one. In the shorter version, then, the commentator only mentions the variant and proceeds to explain the lemma without further reference to the variant.

[62] Both of these scholia agree well with the style of Origen and thus are noted above in the discussion of Origen, although only as secondary evidence.

examples, the scholion begins by building off the lemma, this time not mentioning direct MS evidence but stating more hypothetically "but if it does not say 'without cause,' as some wish that it does not. . . ." The extant text is not complete here, but it is clear from the brief commentary that the author does not believe the omission of the term εἰκῇ to be an acceptable reading, and he explains exegetically why this is the case. As almost a parenthetical comment at the end of the scholion, however, Apollinaris does mention external evidence for the reading he rejects, although his evidence is not from the MSS but the editions or commentaries of other fathers. As Apollinaris states, "Theodore and Theodore" (possibly Theodore of Heraclea and Theodore of Mopsuestia, his elder and younger contemporaries) note that "without cause" is not included in the text. But, as Apollinaris's scholion ends here, there is no further discussion of how this external evidence should be weighed in the discussion.

13.3. Theodore of Mopsuestia

As illustrated by Apollinaris's possible reference to him, Theodore of Mopsuestia is another author who deserves mention for his textual scholarship. Because he was posthumously declared a heretic, many of his writings have been lost or are preserved only in fragmentary form or in translation. However, Theodore was known as a premier scholar of the Antiochene school, and the handful of references to variants in the fragments attributed to him reflect his interest in the state of the text, both OT and NT. As noted in Chapter 1, the reaction to Theodore's aptitude as a text critic is mixed. H. B. Swete carries this assessment over to Theodore's work on the NT as well, saying that

Theodore's textual criticism is the weak point in his skill as an exegete.[63] However, it should be noted that at least Theodore was interested in engaging in text criticism; compare this to only one extant example from his mentor Diodore and only two from his fellow student John Chrysostom.[64] Swete's criticism is based on the allegation that Theodore chooses between variant readings "guided only by a subjective notion of what the sense or sequence requires."[65] In other words, he uses strictly internal evidence.

Swete's first example of Theodore's subjectivity is **Eph 5:14** (§154). Theodore prefers the reading "Christ will shine on you" (inluminabit tibi Christus) over the reading that he finds in other copies (alii legerunt), "Christ will touch you" (continget te Christus), because of the context, which refers to light, and the sense of Paul's use of the quote. Similarly, at **Heb 2:9** (§179) Theodore bases his evaluation strictly on internal evidence, beginning with the corpus of Paul (whom he considers to be the author). In this example, Theodore is even harsher in his examination of the variant. He finds it absurd that some would change the reading from "apart from God" (χωρὶς θεοῦ) to "by the grace of God" (χάριτι θεοῦ), primarily out of their ignorance of the text's meaning and of Paul's usage of such phrases. Secondarily, Theodore considers the theological meaning of the immediate context to show why his preferred reading ("apart from God") makes more sense. But he does not always render such strong judgment between

[63] *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni in epistolas B. Pauli commentarii* (ed. H. B. Swete; 2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1880, 1882), 1:lxx.

[64] Admittedly, this comparison is much more significant in the case of John Chrysostom, whose corpus of available writings is much greater. Diodore's extant works remain scant and fragmentary.

[65] Swete, *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni*, 1: lxxi. Cf. M. F. Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to Jerome* (ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 496-97, who appears to be dependent on Swete.

variants. At **Rom 12:13** (§116), Theodore mentions only in passing the alternative reading that he finds in some of the copies (ἔνια δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων), explaining how both contributing to either the needs (χρείαις) or the remembrance (μνείαις) of the saints means essentially the same thing.

Swete is therefore correct in pointing out that Theodore's primary concern when weighing variants is the context and its sense (the internal evidence). While Theodore does mention the MS evidence, in the examples we have, he does not evaluate it or give it preference. However, because Theodore's work is so fragmentary, his own context for such comments has largely been lost, as have potentially further examples of his discussion of variants. While in general his criteria and values were not identical to those of modern text critics, Theodore did at least acknowledge and weigh variants, in that sense showing a concern for the quality of the text upon which he was commenting.

13.4. Cyril of Alexandria

In addition to the scholia that are known merely as collected excerpts, there are also a number of passages that may be pieced together as extracts from a longer work, sometimes one extant in certain portions only through the catenae. One example of this is part of Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on John*. At **John 12:28** (§88), Cyril notes briefly that whether the Scripture reads "Glorify your Son" or "Glorify your name" makes no difference to the meaning. However, since the focus of his commentary here is on the relation of the Father and the Son, his exegesis primarily depends on the reading "Son." He returns once more to mention both readings as alternatives, but again only in

passing. Other than his exegetical preference for “Son,” Cyril does not comment on the external evidence or explicitly declare this reading preferable to the other.

CHAPTER 3

NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS BY LATIN FATHERS

As noted in the previous chapter, while dividing the Latin fathers from the Greek is in many ways a false dichotomy (especially considering the amount of influence that a Greek writer like Origen had over Latin authors like Jerome and Rufinus), it is helpful in one important way: to distinguish between the variants in the Greek MSS and those known only in the Latin. It is sometimes difficult to maintain this distinction, and the lines often get blurred. In many instances, a writer may only know of both variants from the Latin translations (and thus may be unaware that the same two readings are represented in the Greek), but our modern knowledge of the wider evidence allows us to see what they did not, that the variants are actually further representatives of the Greek readings. At other times, however, divergent readings in the Latin have no Greek MS support and appear to be differences that emerged in the Latin due to varying translations. While such readings are valuable to textual criticism in terms of establishing the various Latin texts, they lie outside the parameters of the present study.

Another issue emerges in the Latin literature that is not present in the Greek, namely, translation. Just as was seen with the matter of the Greek translation of the OT from the original Hebrew, the treatment of the NT text in translation has different focuses and concerns from variations only within the original language. This adds a layer of

complication to the discussion, since not only scribal tendencies but also the skill of translators must be considered. This consequently sometimes blunts the author's awareness of or interest in the variation within the Greek tradition, since there is the expectation of a consistent textual base for the original language from which the translators may work. In other words, the author often overlooks the fact that two competing readings in the Latin are due not to a faulty translation but to two different readings in the Greek exemplars used by the translators.

As in the previous chapter, the writers are addressed in a roughly chronological order, with more detailed attention given to those who show greater interest in the state of the text.

1. Marius Victorinus

Marius Victorinus spent his early years as a pagan rhetor, but once he converted to Christianity, he applied his skill and knowledge to theological issues and biblical commentaries. In the *Commentary on Galatians*, there is one example where Victorinus makes note of a variant, at **Gal 2:5** (§139). He begins with a lemma that reads "for an hour we yielded in subjection" (ad horam cessimus subiectioni), but he quickly notes that some others read the phrase with the negative, "we did not yield" (quidam haec sic legunt: nec . . . cessimus). Beginning with internal evidence, he finds the latter reading more consistent with the context, that Titus was not circumcised, and he explains the meaning of this variant reading. But then Victorinus turns to the external evidence, stating that many copies, both Greek and Latin (in plurimis codicibus et Latinis et Graecis) do not include the negative, and he explains what this reading would then mean.

Victorinus prefers this latter reading, agreeing with his lemma, and proceeds to offer proofs for how this could be true (that Paul did submit, but only for a short time) based on the testimony about Paul in Acts and Paul's own words in 1 Corinthians. Victorinus therefore agrees with the external evidence of his lemma and the bulk of MSS in both Greek and Latin, but only with the addition of internal evidence, here finding the witness of other NT books to outweigh strictly the immediate context of the passage.

2. Hilary

Concerning **Luke 22:43-44** (§74), Hilary is aware that these verses are lacking from some Latin and Greek MSS. He also notes that this account of the angel is lacking from Matthew and Mark. In Hilary's lemma, however, these verses are present; while he acknowledges their questionable authenticity, he shows no hesitation in exegeting them. Perhaps more significantly, Hilary's main concern is to defend this reading against heresy, implying (although not outright claiming) that he believes the verses to have been deleted either by the heretics themselves or by the orthodox who were concerned that needing the assistance of an angel somehow detracted from Jesus's divinity. Hilary is possibly a good example of those Eusebius referred to who were loath to remove anything from Scripture, and so Hilary accepts these verses based on their presence in (at the very least) his lemma, despite the doubt he confesses based on the variety in the MSS.

3. Ambrose

Ambrose gives additional testimony of Latin fathers who were well-versed in the witness of the Greek text. In fact, for Ambrose, the Greek held the weight of the

“original text,” much as the Hebrew was regarded by Origen as the original for the OT. For example, in **Phil 3:3** (§157) Ambrose points out the variation in the Latin MSS (without specifying what that variation consists of) due to the interference of heretics and cites as witness against this variety the Greek evidence, along with the Latin equivalent. In a similar context, he makes even more explicit the importance of the Greek witness in his discussion of **Gal 4:8** (§141), directing the audience to verify his Latin reading against the Greek, “whose authority is greater” (quorum potior auctoritas est).

While Ambrose treats the Greek tradition rather uncritically in these examples, at other times he shows more discernment and awareness of the variety even among the Greek MSS. At **Luke 7:35** (§66), for instance, he notes that the variant is present in most Greek manuscripts (plerique Graeci). Further, in his discussion of **Matt 24:36** (§38) Ambrose notes the antiquity of the Greek MSS[1] by appealing to the ancient Greek manuscripts (veteres . . . codices graeci) that lack the variant. He thus shows a preference for external evidence based on the original language and the majority and antiquity of the MSS. In addition, Ambrose, like Origen, seems to view agreement between the Synoptics as another form of external evidence. At **Luke 11:13** (§68), after citing the parallel in Matthew, Ambrose notes that Luke has a variant that agrees with the Matthean reading; rather than pointing this out as a harmonization, he views it as further evidence to strengthen his exegetical point. Altogether, then, Ambrose puts a good deal of emphasis on external evidence, mostly due to his respect for the Greek.

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[1] This statement could be taken in two ways: either he is discerning the oldest copies among the Greek tradition, or he is referring to the Greek tradition as a whole as older than the Latin. While Ambrose clearly regards the Greek texts as superior because they are prior to the Latin, his comment on Luke 7:35 also shows an awareness of the individual Greek MSS, so it is reasonable to understand him as here appealing to the oldest among the Greek MSS.

Alongside this, Ambrose also appeals to the internal evidence of orthodoxy, showing the same concern for textual tampering as did Hilary. As seen above, Ambrose attributes the diversity in Phil 3:3 to the heretics. At Matt 24:36, he again blames the heretics for the alteration, necessitating that he launch into a lengthy discussion of the correct understanding of the passage in order to defend the proper Christological reading.[2] While in this example, he does seem to give consideration to each variant, as long as each can yield an orthodox understanding, often he finds the weight of the Greek or the orthodox reading persuasive enough to show clear preference for one variant over the other—so much so that for Gal 4:8 and Phil 3:3, he doesn't even bother to specify the wording of the variant, only citing the correct text. But orthodoxy remains Ambrose's primary internal criterion.

4. Ambrosiaster

The author known as Ambrosiaster is actually an anonymous commentator primarily responsible for a commentary on the Pauline epistles. In this work, there are at least five discussions of variants, the most informative of which is on **Rom 5:14** (§103). Here, Ambrosiaster lays out quite clearly his criteria for deciding between variants: "reason, history, and authority" (et ratio et historia et auctoritas). His Latin lemma for this verse states, "death reigned . . . over those who sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam" (regnavit mors . . . qui peccaverunt in similitudinem

[2] Regarding a variant in **John 3:6** (§81), known today only in the Old Latin and Old Syriac, Ambrose launches into a very specific attack against the Arians for falsifying the Scriptures, charging that they erased this text from their MSS: "And would indeed that you expunged it from your own copies and not also from those of the Church!" He cites examples from Sirmium and Milan where this variant was lacking from texts, which Ambrose attributes to less than orthodox priests, and he surmises that the same thing has been done in the East (see B. M. Metzger, "The Practice of Textual Criticism Among the Church Fathers" *StPatr* 12 [1975]: 348).

praevaricationis Adae). But Ambrosiaster is also aware of a variant in the Greek (in Graeco) that contains a negative particle: "those who did *not* sin" (qui *non* peccaverunt). He notes the difference between the Latin and the Greek manuscripts (de Graecis codicibus) and sets out to evaluate which is the correct reading.

First, he explains why there is a variant: because someone who could not win an argument over the text based on reason alone has intentionally altered the reading to manufacture textual authority (i.e., the Greek MSS). Ambrosiaster notes that some of the Latin copies were translated at an earlier time directly from the "uncorrupted" Greek, so the Latin reading itself is based on Greek authority. But since those earlier days, heretics have caused the text to be altered; therefore, the two readings are present in the Greek tradition itself. In this argument, Ambrosiaster shows some disdain for appeal to the Greek MSS; at the same time, he manages both to find Greek support for the Latin reading (since it was based on an earlier Greek version—and a superior, "uncorrupted" Greek version at that), and to undercut the Greek evidence by accusing it of being divided amongst itself and potentially corrupted by heretics. Thus, since the Greek evidence is divided, and perhaps even manufactured, an appeal to the external evidence of the Greek MSS alone cannot determine the best reading of the text.

Having dismissed an appeal to Greek evidence, then, Ambrosiaster asserts a decision should instead be based upon a combination of reason, history, and authority. Reason, he has already shown in his exegesis of the text, explaining how death reigns over all who sin like Adam. Authority, he next exhibits by pointing out that the Latin reading is corroborated by the authoritative voices of Tertullian, Victorinus, and Cyprian. History, he then emphasizes by referring to the history of Judea, where the reign of death

began to crumble with the arrival of Christ. Therefore, Ambrosiaster puts greater weight on church authority than MS authority, in terms of external evidence, along with the agreement of the internal evidence of a reading most cohesive with the sense of the text, the rule of faith, and history.

While Ambrosiaster does not lay out the evidence with this precision in other discussions of variants, his textual decisions bear out this same process. In **Rom 12:11**, he is going through the verses clause by clause; after citing the Latin reading, "serving the time," he notes a Greek variant (in Graeco), "serving the Lord." However, without considering whether the variant might have any weight strictly by the fact it is in the Greek texts, he automatically dismisses it as not fitting the context. He then explains the church members in Rome were already serving the Lord, so Paul did not need to exhort them to do so. He finds further support for the meaning of "serving the time" in Eph 5:16 (cf. Col 4:5-6). Thus, Ambrosiaster dismisses the external (Greek) evidence, arguing solely based on the internal evidence of the "reason" of the text, within the context of both Romans and the Pauline corpus.

Similarly, at **Gal 2:5** (§137), Ambrosiaster notes a Greek (Graeci) variant, which like Rom 5:14 is the presence of a negative particle ("*not* for an hour did we yield"). Here, he does not give the same harsh verdict that a heretic has changed the text, but he also does not give the reading weight strictly due to its Greek provenance. He first explains how they could understand the text this way, but then he spends a great deal of time weighing out, by reason, the meaning of the two different readings. Clearly, he finds reason to lean more heavily in favor of the Latin reading, in agreement with both history (primarily in Acts, where Paul did yield by circumcising Timothy and by

purifying himself before entering the temple) and the literary context of the Pauline corpus. Ambrosiaster charitably leaves the final decision between the variants up to the audience, although he has clearly argued the case in favor of his Latin lemma.

Earlier in his discussion of Galatians 2, Ambrosiaster notes another variant, at **Acts 15:29** (§98), but with less direct information about the external evidence. Rather than mentioning the Greek texts, he refers to a reading added by "the sophists of the Greeks." It is unclear whether Ambrosiaster is referring to a specific class of people or indicating the Greeks as a whole, but in light of his other comments about the Greek evidence, his negative evaluation of these Greeks is not surprising. He suggests that these sophists (wise guys, perhaps?) think themselves to have an innate understanding of things (i.e., to know better than Scripture or church elders), and so based on their interpretation of the prohibitions passed on by the Jerusalem elders, especially the charge to abstain from "blood," they have adulterated the text by adding a fourth prohibition to the list (to abstain from what has been strangled [et a suffocato]). In this instance, then, even though these Greeks have applied reason to their evaluation of the text, by Ambrosiaster's estimation it is a faulty reason that has led them to corrupt the text.

In one other instance, Ambrosiaster is more ambiguous in his treatment of a variant, although again he shows preference for internal evidence. At **2 Cor 5:3** (§136), he cites first the reading "we have been clothed" (siquidem induti) and explains its meaning, and then he notes that some other manuscripts have the variant (alii codices sic habent) "we have been stripped" (siquidem expoliati). The lack of any mention of the Greek suggests that the variant is in the Latin tradition, which may be why he makes no further comment about the external evidence. While at face value the readings may seem

contradictory, Ambrosiaster is able to show that both essentially have the same meaning in the context, since those who are stripped of the body are clothed in Christ by the Holy Spirit. Thus, since both readings argue for the same orthodox understanding, he does not express any need to decide between them. However, as the discussion proceeds, Ambrosiaster continues to refer back to the reading of his lemma. It is clear, then, in these examples where Ambrosiaster's textual priorities lie: with the internal evidence of literary context and history, and with the external evidence of the Latin fathers, who are much more reliable than the Greek tradition, which is open to heresy and corruption.

5. Rufinus

Known primarily for his translations, it is within that translational work that the majority of Rufinus's textual comments may be found. However, because those works remain under the name of the original authors, it is often difficult to determine with certainty which comments belong to Rufinus and which to the author.[3] It is clear from one of Rufinus's few original works, though, that he was aware of variations within the NT textual tradition. Commenting on **1 Cor 15:51** (§133), Rufinus mentions after citing

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[3] The difference between the comments of the author and additions by Rufinus can best be discerned by mention of the Latin MSS. Origen in particular is not known to discuss these apart from the Latin translations of his commentaries. It is possible at times, though, that only the reference to the Latin evidence has been added by Rufinus and the discussion of the variant belongs to the author. Here, the conclusion must remain speculative, and scholarly opinion often differs. For example, at **Rom 12:11** (§113) and **12:13** (§114), Rufinus appears to follow a lemma based on a translation that agrees with Origen's Greek text, but then he adds the comment that some Latin copies have a variant reading. In both cases, an explanation is offered for each reading, so it is not clear whether the discussion of the variant (and the comments relating to it) belong entirely to Rufinus or were adapted from Origen's original discussion. For both verses, Scheck, in his notes on the English translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, attributes the comments originally to Origen since both variants occur in the Greek tradition; however, he does note other scholars who attribute the entire discussion to Rufinus (cf. 2:214 n. 142). Scheck has a similar footnote at **Rom 7:6** (§107) (2:28 n. 164), but not at **Rom 8:22** (§110), both of which references to variants may also possibly belong to Rufinus. For a more detailed discussion of whether the mention of variants should be attributed to Rufinus or Origen, see C. P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung* (AGLB 10; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1985), 213-30.

the verse to read "we will all indeed rise again, but we will not all be changed" (omnes quidem resurgemus, non omnes autem immutabimur) that some copies (in aliis exemplaribus) instead read "we will not all indeed sleep, but we will all be changed" (omnes quidem non dormiemus, omnes autem immutabimur), which includes both the variation in "rise again" versus "sleep" and the inversion in the negative between the clauses. This comment, however, is simply made in passing in the midst of quoting extensively from the chapter. Rufinus offers no further explanation for the variant, nor does he show a preference for the proper reading, but proceeds into another quote from 1 Thessalonians, continuing his catena of scriptural proofs.

In Rufinus's translations, he preferred to use his Latin lemma as the commentary base, but because of this he occasionally ran into a problem that the Greek author was using a slightly different lemma and therefore is discussing a different version of the text from what Rufinus has set forth for his audience. On these occasions, he must at some point explain to the audience why the discussion does not agree with the Scriptural text. One example of this is in Origen's discussion of **Rom 16:5** (§118). Since Origen mentions "firstfruits" several times in his commentary on this verse, it seems that his text read "the firstfruits of Asia" (ἀπαρχὴ τῆς ᾿Ασιάς). The lemma offered by Rufinus, however, is based on a Greek variant, "from the beginning of Asia" (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τῆς ᾿Ασίας). Shortly into the commentary, Rufinus must clarify this point, and so he adds "or, as it is rendered in Greek" with Origen's original base text. Unfortunately, Rufinus does not express awareness that this difference is based on a variation in the Greek tradition rather than being merely a translational issue, so he does not comment on it further.

In another example, the text that Origen attests is rare, if not unique to him, so understandably Rufinus must insert the reading that his Latin audience would recognize. At **Col 2:15** (§160), Origen is consistent in rendering "triumphing over them on the wood" (τῷ ξύλῳ), or as the Latin translation clarifies, "on the wood of the cross" (triumphans eas in ligno crucis). However, there is no extant MS evidence supporting this reading, so it is not surprising that Rufinus notes a different reading here, "triumphing over them in himself" (in semet ipso; αὐτῷ). He says that while this latter reading is in other copies (in aliis exemplaribus), the first reading is found in the Greek (i.e., in Origen). It is precisely because of this mention of the Greek, coupled with Origen's consistency in his use of the rare reading, that it is clear the comment is Rufinus's, not Origen's.

At other times, however, while the comment may be clearly traced back to Rufinus, it is not certain whether the difference he notes attests a variant in the Greek text. While the example from Rom 16:5 is clear because the Greek variant is attested in the MSS, the situation in Origen's commentary on **2 Tim 4:6** (§170) is much more murky. Rufinus first cites the text as reading "the time of my release" (tempus resolutionis), but then adds that the Greek MSS have "the time of my return" (reversionis). While the phrasing is very similar to what Rufinus said at Rom 16:5, here there is no known Greek variant. It is possible that he is merely discussing a matter of translation, not a variant.[4] However, if, as Metzger suggests, this is evidence of a Greek variant, and the comment originated with Origen, then it is an extremely valuable piece of

[4] Along these lines, Doutreleau concludes that the comment belongs entirely to Rufinus, who possibly saw the alternate reading in the margin of his copy of 2 Timothy and included here, and that the variation may be simply an alternate translation to clarify the Greek (SC 415: 280).

evidence for an otherwise lost variant.[5] In either case, Rufinus, as elsewhere, does not dwell on the variant or explain it but simply makes his audience aware of the potential difference between their text and that of the commentator.

6. Jerome

While the majority of Jerome's textual efforts were spent on translating the OT from the Hebrew, we know that he did complete a revision of the Gospels against the Greek.[6] Whether he engaged in a similar project for the rest of the NT is debated.[7] In his commentaries and letters, however, it is clear that Jerome regularly compared his Latin exemplar against the Greek.[8] Although he did not always change his lemma to reflect a better translation, he freely commented on the more appropriate reading based on a comparison with the Latin and Greek copies.[9] Because Jerome produced his revision of the Latin Gospels early in his translation career and before his later radical choice to abandon the LXX for the Hebrew as his base text for the OT, the Gospels revision reflects a more conservative method. Rather than attempting a fresh translation, Jerome

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[5] B. M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963), 91.

[6] Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*; *Ep.* 27.1.

[7] C. Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*: The Creation of the Vulgate," *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996): 44. See a summary of the arguments in B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 356-59.

[8] In this respect, Jerome once again parallels his model, Origen, who expended the majority of his efforts on revising the OT text, yet continued to evaluate the NT text on a smaller scale in his commentaries and other writings.

[9] For example, regarding the Pauline epistles see A. Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927), 104-7.

retained the form of the text familiar to the churches whenever possible, making changes only when necessary to clarify or correct the meaning of the text.[10]

The same kind of frustration that Origen expressed over the diversity among the NT MSS, Jerome likewise expressed in the preface to his revision of the Gospels. For Jerome, though, the issue was not the variations in the original language but the divergent translations. The cure for this diversity was therefore to return to "the fountainhead"—the original Greek.[11] Yet Jerome does not accept the Greek uncritically, the way he does the Hebrew Bible. Generally, he finds it sufficient to compare simply "the Greek" against the Latin MSS, but occasionally he also notes variants among the Greek copies.[12] Just as Jerome took heat for adding readings to or deleting readings from the familiar LXX-based Latin translation of the OT, he also faced some criticism for adding to or deleting text from the Latin NT based on the Greek.

In *Epistle* 27, Jerome lists a handful of examples where he much prefers to return to the pure spring of the Greek rather than the muddied waters of the Latin translation used by his opponents. For the three examples he gives, Jerome only mentions each in passing.[13] At **Rom 12:11** (§112), he prefers "serving the Lord" over "serving the time."[14]

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[10] Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels.*

[11] *Preface to the Four Gospels* (NPNF 2.6:488); see also Jerome, *Ep.* 27.1. Cf. D. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992), 34, who is heavily dependent here on the work by K. K. Hulley ("Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 55 [1944]: 88-89).

[12] For example, **1 Cor 13:3** (§124); **Col 2:18** (§162); and the extensive discussion of **1 Cor 15:51** (§131) in Jerome, *Ep.* 119.

[13] It is interesting that even though this letter was written in 384, around the time he revised the Gospels, and he specifically mentions the Gospel revision as the reason for the accusations, all three examples he cites are not from the Gospels but from the epistles. In his treatise *Against Helvidius* on the virginity of Mary, written around the same time (383), Jerome uses a similar metaphor of the Greek as the pure fountain and the Latin translation as the stream (*Helv.* 8), this time in reference **Luke 2:33** (§64). His

At **1 Tim 5:19** (§169), he prefers the reading that an elder may be accused only "before two or three witnesses," not unconditionally (implying that this phrase is lacking in the opponents' texts). At **1 Tim 1:15** (§167), he prefers "it is a faithful saying" to "it is a human saying."[15] In the last example, Jerome spells out in the most detail what his primary criterion is in each of these decisions: "we are content to err with the Greeks, that is to say with the apostle himself, who spoke Greek" (nos cum Graecis, id est cum apostolo, qui Graece est locutus, erremus).[16] Thus, while Jerome followed a more conservative method with the NT, revising rather than retranslating, he was not shy to assert that the very textual readings (and not merely the translation) of the Latin should be changed where a Greek reading could be deemed superior.

Jerome at times uses the Greek evidence to point out the deficiency of the Latin translation. At **Eph 4:29** (§151), Jerome uses the primary Greek reading (following Origen's *Commentary on Ephesians*) as the basis of his discussion. However, he does note that the Latin contains an alternate reading, a euphemism introduced by the translator (in Latinis codicibus propter euphoniam mutavit interpres) to explain the Greek "need" or "occasion" as building up the "faith." Jerome does not show awareness of the same variant in the Greek, as known today, but he may be correct in identifying the source of the variant: the limited Greek evidence primarily derives from Greek-Latin diglots, showing that the reading was at the very least closely wed to the Latin tradition. Similarly, for **Eph 1:6** (§146) and **3:14** (§148) Jerome notes what he understands to be

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implication here is that the reading in question is found in both the original language and the majority of texts, and thus is not corrupt as Helvidius claims.

[14] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 184.

[15] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 186.

[16] Jerome, *Ep.* 27.3; NPNF 2.6:44.

additions (pluses) in the Latin text. While he does not mention the Greek MSS on either occasion, it is implicit that the Greek lacks these readings, and therefore the additions should be rejected as secondary, which he swiftly does as he continues on with his commentary.[17] At **Eph 5:22** (§156), Jerome points out that the verb added in the Latin is not present in the Greek because in the Greek construction the verb is unnecessary. Thus, the variant can only fully be understood in the Greek because of a difference in the languages.[18]

It is noteworthy that so many examples may be found in Jerome's *Commentary on Ephesians*, a composition that is admittedly (see his preface) reliant on Origen's own commentary. This highlights a complication in examining Jerome's treatment of variants. Like Rufinus, Jerome was not only an author but also a translator, primarily of Origen. And the two roles were not always entirely separable in his work. Thus, when Jerome composed a text such as his own *Commentary on Ephesians,* he duplicated large portions of Origen's writing, necessarily becoming a translator of Origen's text as he embedded it within his own. In this context, Jerome was free to edit and add as he saw fit, particularly in the case of mentioning variants. So, for example, at **Eph 2:4** (§147), we know from the extant Greek parallel from Origen's commentary that Jerome is borrowing this speculation on a textual problem directly from Origen, only elaborating on

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[17] A similar example is found in his *Commentary on Galatians* at **Gal 5:19-21** (§142). Jerome notes three items added to the list of vices in the Latin copies (in latinis codicibus), but his only comment on this is that he is unsure there should be more than fifteen items in the list (apparently, the number he knows from the Greek copies).

[18] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 186. Jerome also attests a rare variant in **Mark 16:14** (§60), which he refers to as being present "in some exemplars and especially the Greek copies" (in quibusdam exemplaribus et maxime Graecis codicibus), so that he places particular emphasis on the witness of Greek MSS. While the part of the verse of most interest to us today is the variant known as the Freer Logion, Jerome is likely referring to the entire longer ending of Mark (cf. **Mark 16:9ff.**; §57). See Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 182-83; idem, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 345-46.

it slightly (Origen says that the difficult passage may have been falsely inserted or not perceived as redundant by Paul who was admittedly unskilled in speech, while Jerome expands the statement to say that the insertion was by ignorant scribes, and qualifies that Paul may have been lacking in skill but not in knowledge). In the case of **Eph 5:14** (§153), however, there is no extant parallel from Origen, and it appears that the entire anecdote about the variant used as the basis for a rousing sermon illustration has been inserted by Jerome.

At times, when the Latin diverged from Origen's lemma, Jerome could only appropriate Origen's discussion once he explained the difference in readings. Thus, at **Eph 4:19** (§150), Jerome is aware that his Latin lemma, "those who despair" (desperantes), is based on a different Greek reading (ἀπηλπικότες) from the text Origen is discussing, which is "those who feel no grief" (ἀπηλγηκότες). Once Jerome explains this difference, he then reproduces much of Origen's explication of this phrase. While Jerome describes this only as a difference between Greek and Latin, citing no further MS evidence, the difference he is explaining is not merely translational but based on a variant in the Greek tradition, showing a greater perception of the evidence than simply what is available to him in Origen's commentary.

But, like Rufinus, Jerome may also have felt free to add comments about variants in works that were strictly translations and still bore Origen's name as author. For example, at **Luke 1:46** (§62), in Jerome's translation of Origen's *Homilies on Luke*, it appears that the reference to the variant (attributing the Magnificat to Elizabeth instead of Mary) is an addition by Jerome, presumably for the sake of his Latin audience that may encounter the variant in their own copies of Luke. In the *Homilies on Psalms*, the

situation becomes even more complicated and illustrates perfectly the challenge. While these homilies have long been attributed to Jerome, more recent scholarship has raised the suggestion that some or all of these homilies are actually Origen's, and that Jerome is instead the translator. In the case, then, of the numerous variants discussed in *Hom.* 11 on Ps 77 (LXX) (see below), which bear marks of Jerome's own hand, it is unclear whether the variants were first noted by Origen and elaborated upon by Jerome or were entirely added by Jerome—or perhaps one or two of the references go back to Origen, and Jerome used the occasion to add the rest as further examples.

Even if Jerome had authored the entire homily himself, that is no guarantee that he was not borrowing the material originally from Origen or another source (as in his own *Commentary on Ephesians*). This is reinforced further by the fact that all three of the variants discussed in *Hom.* 11 are variants also discussed by Eusebius (one repeating the same tradition found in Eusebius [**John 19:14** (§95)], and two of them appearing also in Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*, another work of his that depended heavily on Origen's commentary). The borrowing is even more obvious in Jerome's letter to Hedibia, where he discusses **Mark 16:9ff.** (§57).[19] Not only are his answers a condensed paraphrase of Eusebius's *Quaestiones ad Marinum*, but the questions that prompted the answers appear to be cribbed as well. But Jerome did not borrow the material without modifying it for his own audience: he clarifies that the bulk of MSS, described as lacking the longer ending to Mark, are the *Greek* MSS. Another example of where Jerome cites previous material but augments it for his audience is in *Ep.* 119, when he refers to the variant at **1 Cor 15:52** (§134). The larger context is the discussion of 1 Cor 15:51 (see

[19] Metzger, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 344; idem, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 182.

§130), where Jerome has been quoting Didymus at length. When Jerome cites the portion on the variant in v. 52, however, it is clear that to some extent he has added his own comments, since he points out the Greek words and their meanings along with the Latin equivalents. The resulting text is an interwoven tapestry of threads by both Jerome and Didymus so that the end result is difficult to separate out again into its component parts, especially without unraveling the coherence of the final text.

In these tendencies to borrow and amend, Jerome is not alone in his generation, even if at times he is more conspicuous. As mentioned, Jerome did not differ entirely from the translation habits of Rufinus, who also added information about variants in order to adapt a commentary to his Latin audience, who were reading a different base text than that upon which the commentary was originally based. Jerome was also not the only scholar in the early church to borrow heavily from the works of others, often without clear attribution (see the General Introduction). Within the context of discussion of variants in particular, Jerome stands as one example of many who borrow and pass along previous traditions about differences in the MSS, making the dating of the original MS evidence more difficult. But Jerome is also one of the fathers whom we can be sure actually was familiar with the Greek text and diversity among MSS, so that where he adapted the traditions that passed through his hands, those adaptations may have been based on his own personal experience with the MSS themselves.

As a translator himself, then, Jerome was well aware of the freedom a translator had to adapt the text, validating his distrust in previous translations of the NT. But if he harbored doubts about anonymous translators, he had even less faith in the competence of copyists. He was keenly aware of the damage that could be wrought by a careless, inept,

or meddling scribe. In his preface to the Gospels, Jerome refers to errors creeping into the Latin from three sources: "inaccurate translators, . . . confident but ignorant critics, and . . . copyists more asleep than awake."[20] This is perhaps the chief reason why Jerome places so much weight on the oldest MSS: the more recent a copy, the more copyists' hands it has passed through, and therefore the more opportunities to accumulate errors.[21] He therefore evaluates the external evidence based on the quality of the scribal tradition, not on a notion of text types or location (as he did with the OT). However, Jerome does mention copies of the NT associated with Lucian and Hesychius, which he summarily rejects as poor quality if not blatantly erroneous.[22]

Karl Hulley enumerates thirteen types of errors (plus a fourteenth miscellaneous category) that Jerome notes as introduced into the Latin copies by scribes or translators.[23] While much of Hulley's evidence is from the OT, there are a few examples in Jerome's

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[20] Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*; NPNF 2.6:488 (uel a uitiosis interpretibus male edita uel a praesumptoribus inperitis emendata peruersius uel a librariis dormitantibus aut addita sunt aut mutate [*Biblia Sacra Vulgata* (ed. R. Weber et al.; 4th ed.; Stuttgart: Germany Bible Society, 1994), 1515 *ll.* 14-16]). Cf. Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 88-89. Jerome has a similar critique of scribes in his *Ep.* 71.5, although in this case referring to copies of his owns works—he is adamant that if any mistakes are found in his works, they are not to be attributed to him but are the fault of ignorant copyists.

[21] See Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 92-93 and the references cited in nn. 17 and 45.

[22] "I pass over those manuscripts which are associated with the names of Lucian and Hesychius, and the authority of which is perversely maintained by a handful of disputatious persons. It is obvious that these writers could not amend anything in the Old Testament after the labours of the Seventy; and it was useless to correct the New, for versions of Scripture which already exist in the languages of many nations show that their additions are false" (Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*; NPNF 2.6:488).

[23] The fourteen categories are: faulty word-division, faulty accentuation, faulty punctuation, confusion of number-signs [**John 19:14//Mark 15:25** (§95)], confusion of similar letters [**1 Cor 13:3** (§124)], confusion of abbreviations, dittography and haplography, metathesis of letters, assimilation, omissions, transpositions, conscious emendation [**Matt 13:35** (§§27, 28)], interpolations, various errors (nature not specified) (Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 94-101).

discussion of NT variants.[24] The primary location where Jerome discusses such errors at length is in *Homily* 11 on Ps 77 (LXX) (see above). To illustrate that ignorance of the Scriptures causes one to err (Matt 22:29), Jerome cites three examples where scribes have introduced errors into the text through their lack of knowledge. The first example is **Matt 13:35** (§27), which falls under Hulley's category of conscious emendation.[25] Jerome also discusses the same variant in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§28), where the lemma reads "spoken by the prophet," but Jerome also knows of the reading "spoken by the prophet Isaiah." The quotation introduced by this, however, is clearly from Ps 78 (77 LXX), not Isaiah, so Jerome feels the need to explain such an egregious error. He conjectures here that the text originally read "the prophet Asaph," which is the name introduced in the psalm's inscription. In the discussion in *Hom.* 11, Jerome says this reading is found in "all of the oldest manuscripts" (in omnibus ueteribus codicibus).[26]

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[24] One more example not treated here is **John 4:5** (§83). Jerome is discussing a Hebrew place name and quotes John 4:5 as evidence, but he notes that an error has crept in (error inolevit) so that there is also a variant reading. However, he doesn't explain a reason for the error or even explicitly attribute it to a scribe. This may be similar to his treatment of variants such at **Matt 27:9** (§§43, 44), where he believes that the evangelist was correct in his original reading but that an error was subsequently introduced into the text.

[25] Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 99 n. 82. B. M. Metzger ("St Jerome's Explicit References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* [ed. E. Best and R. M. Wilson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979], 179-90) discusses a number of the examples of explicit citations of variants cited here; for Matt 13:35, see p. 181.

[26] It is quite interesting, and perhaps telling, to be able to compare the two contexts where Jerome discusses the same textual problem, either or both of which could be dependent on Origen. It is difficult to date the homily accurately enough to determine which of these two works by Jerome came first and whether there was a change in his knowledge about the MS evidence. In the *Commentary on Matthew*, Jerome does not explicitly mention MSS reading "Asaph" and presents the argument for this original reading as though based on his own logic and opinion. In *Hom.* 11, however, he clearly states that "all of the oldest manuscripts" have this reading. Is this statement based on first- or secondhand knowledge of such MSS, or is this simply how Jerome phrases his conjecture that surely the earliest copies must have read "Asaph"? If the latter is true, this may explain why we currently have no MS evidence for "Asaph." But it also significantly calls into question every time that Jerome or another father appeals to MS evidence. It is also interesting to note that what appears as Jerome's lemma in the commentary is not even mentioned in the homily. The additional question raised by all of this is to what extent Jerome may be

Jerome's argument continues similarly in both the homily and the commentary: a scribe who was unfamiliar with the prophet Asaph considered this a scribal error and emended to Isaiah (evidence of the problematic kind of conjecture that Jerome opposes). Jerome elaborates in *Hom.* 11 that the earliest church was full of ignorant people (implicitly, that the Gentiles were unfamiliar with the Jewish Scriptures), and that is why they mistakenly replaced an uncommon name with a more common one. In fact, he describes that in trying to correct an error, they have created an error. While in this homily Jerome makes no mention of the variant in which the name is wanting, in the Matthew commentary he further explains that later scribes who knew Isaiah was incorrect then deleted his name to read simply "the prophet."

The second example of scribal error that Jerome adduces in *Hom.* 11 is at **John 19:14//Mark 15:25** (§95) and is Hulley's chief example of confusion of number signs.[27] Jerome explains that while there appears to be a discrepancy between John (along with Matthew [27:45]) and Mark regarding the hour at which Jesus was crucified, the error is really in the MS tradition. Mark originally read "sixth hour" in agreement with the other Gospels, but a scribe mistook the six (Jerome cites the Greek word: pro ἐπισήμῳ graeco) for a three (gamma). Thus, Jerome concludes, just like Matt 13:35, this also is a scribal error. He then cites a third example, from **Matt 27:9** (§43), although he spends the majority of the discussion simply explaining the discrepancy in the text, that in the context of the fate of Judas and his blood money, a text from Zechariah is quoted as a text

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quoting or paraphrasing Origen in either of these contexts, and thus how much of the testimony belongs to Origen and how much to Jerome.

[27] Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism," 95-96. On John 19:14//Mark 15:25, see Metzger, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 346-47; and S. Bartina, "Ignotum episèmon gabex," *Verbum Domini* 36 (1958): 16-37. Attributing the apparent discrepancies between these verses to a scribal error is not original to Jerome but a tradition that he has received as is passing along. See the discussion in Chapter 4, below.

from Jeremiah. Jerome mentions that he has searched Jeremiah time and again looking for this reference, but he has only found it in Zechariah.[28] He offers no details on the reason for this scribal error, but merely notes that it is similar to the examples he has already given (there are clearly some parallels with the Asaph/Isaiah discrepancy, so the implication is that a scribe—and not the evangelist—did not know his OT well enough and introduced the error).

In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Jerome also mentions a scribal error that Hulley classifies as confusion of similar letters.[29] In **1 Cor 13:3** (§124), there is a variant present among the Latin manuscripts (in latinis codicibus) that may only be properly explained by referring back to the Greek.[30] Jerome points out that the two variants represented in the Greek copies (Graecos exemplaria), καυθήσομαι and καυχήσομαι, differ only by one letter. Therefore, the variant present in the Greek has carried over into the Latin MSS. Here, an appeal to the original language provides only understanding of the variants, not authority for choosing between them since the Greek MSS themselves are diverse. While Jerome shows no explicit preference between the two readings, he retains "boast" as his lemma, but he does not reject the alternate reading as incorrect.

When Jerome explicitly mentions NT variants, he sometimes argues for the superiority of one reading over another (see below), but he just as often lets both readings

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[28] Jerome also mentions this textual problem in his *Commentary on Matthew*, but he mentions only that the text is found in Zechariah instead of Jeremiah without any discussion of MSS or scribal errors. He actually claims that he has found this exact quote in an apocryphal book of Jeremiah but that he thinks it is more likely that the evangelist was paraphrasing the OT. See also Jerome, *Ep.* 57.7, where he compares the LXX and Hebrew versions of Zech 11:12-13 (in Latin) to determine the source of the Matthew quote.

[29] Hulley ("Principles of Textual Criticism," 96) refers to this as perhaps the most common type of error mentioned by Jerome, although the majority of these examples refer to the confusion of Hebrew letters.

[30] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 185. **Romans 12:11** (§112) is likely another example of this type of error, but Jerome does not discuss the Greek words behind the variant.

stand without voicing a preference. In this, he displays the same conservatism as his forerunner Origen, who often mentioned a variant in passing or exegeted both variants rather than arguing for one as the correct reading. For example, at **Matt 6:25** (§18) Jerome cites, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, nor what you will wear on your body." He comments that some manuscripts (in nonnullis codicibus) also add "nor what you will drink." However, Jerome swiftly moves on, simply summarizing the meaning of the verse without further mention of the variant.[31] Likewise, at **Acts 15:29** (§99) Jerome is listing out the practices prohibited by the apostles after their decision at the council.[32] He notes that besides abstaining from food offered to idols, blood, and fornication, some copies (in nonnullis exemplaribus) also add "and from what is strangled." Again, he simply moves on with his commentary, passing on to further discussion about circumcision and the Gentiles, without determining which reading is to be preferred. At **Heb 2:9** (§175) as well, Jerome's reference to the variant is little more than a brief parenthetical comment.[33] Quoting the verse as a proof text, he quotes first "by the grace of God" and then states in the middle of his citation of the verse, "or, as some copies read, 'without God'" (siue, ut in quibusdam exemplaribus legitur, absque Deo). But since Jerome's real interest is the next phrase in the verse, he pays no further attention to the variant.

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[31] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 180.

[32] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 183-84.

[33] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 186.

Jerome also occasionally offers an exegesis for both readings. Several examples of this appear in his *Commentary on Matthew.*[34] At **Matt 11:19** (§24), he first explains the meaning of "wisdom is justified by her children," then mentions that certain copies of the Gospels (in quibusdam euangeliis) read instead "by her works." Without expressing a preference between the variants, Jerome briefly explains how this second reading is to be understood before passing on to the next verse. Just a few verses later, at **Matt 11:23** (§25), Jerome notes that the first clause may be read either as a question (will you be exalted?) or, as in another copy (in altero exemplari), as a statement (you have been exalted). The meaning, he then determines, is twofold, referring either to the negative option out of two possible fates, or a judgment that because they have been exalted, or honored, by the presence of Jesus and not responded accordingly, they will be judged. Thus, he offers an interpretation for either reading, although the real emphasis is on the second clause, and so the meaning does not significantly change either way.

Similarly, in his commentary on Matthew 16, Jerome begins by citing **Matt 16:2-3** (§29). He mentions then that these verses are lacking from most copies (in plerisque codicibus), but that does not deter him from offering a brief exegesis. While Jerome does not explicitly say whether the verses are best included or omitted, his explication of them offers them a certain validation. At **Matt 21:31** (§36), Jerome goes a step further. While his lemma says that the Jews answered Jesus's question about the parable of the two sons with "the latter (son)," in the genuine copies (in ueris exemplaribus) the text reads "the first (son)." Yet Jerome allows that the text may be read either way, so he offers an

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[34] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 180-82.

explanation for both readings, showing how both equally reflect the Jews of this chapter in a bad light.

At times, even the inclusion or omission of a negative is not enough to change the meaning of a verse. In **Col 2:18** (§162), Jerome's lemma reads "what things he has not seen" (quae non uidit).[35] In paraphrasing this verse, Jerome notes parenthetically that whether the person in question has not seen or has seen, and the Greek has both readings (utrumque enim habetur in Graeco), the meaning is the same: this person is puffed up in pride. Jerome does imply that the second reading, that the person has seen, makes slightly more sense, but he does not argue that one reading is superior to the other, nor does he suggest that the two yield contradictory meanings. In **Gal 2:5** (§138), Jerome likewise addresses the inclusion or omission of a negative.[36] While in this case he does not argue that either reading can mean the same thing, he does explain how either may be understood within the context. If the text reads, as in the Greek copies (iuxta graecos codices), "we did not yield for an hour," then it is referring to Titus refusing to be circumcised; however, if the Latin copies are at all reliable (si latini exemplaris alicui fides placet), which read, "we yielded for an hour," then this is referring to Paul and Barnabas giving in to their critics and agreeing to go to Jerusalem to discuss circumcision with the council of elders. Therefore, while Jerome shows an implicit preference for following the Greek version, based on the immediate context in Galatians, he also allows for the validity of the Latin reading and offers an exegesis for it. In these examples we see Jerome following a practice primarily of Origen, but also of other fathers, to place the

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[35] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 186.

[36] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 185.

main emphasis on the overall meaning of the context, so that as long as either variant points toward the same meaning, either is an acceptable reading. It is when Jerome feels that a variant is pointing the audience in the wrong direction or creates a problem in the text that he discerns the reason for the error and the correct or original reading. (A few of these examples have already been seen above where Jerome specifically explains that a variant is due to a scribal error, often because of the scribe's ignorance.)

When Jerome does refer to evidence to argue for one variant over another, he most often appeals to external evidence, notably the antiquity or quality of the MSS. As noted above, Jerome's doubts about the ability of many copyists led him to place more weight on the older MSS because they had been through fewer copyists' hands and therefore had fewer chances for errors to creep in. At the same time, Jerome was aware that even the earliest generation of copyists could likewise be responsible for errors due to their ignorance of Scripture, so that the error was proliferated from early in the tradition and the original reading is all but lost (see the discussion of Matt 13:35 and 27:9, above).[37] However, Jerome held to the concept that older was better, so he at times referred to the oldest copies in his appeal to evidence. For example, in a chain of verses in his praise of Marcella's ascetic lifestyle, Jerome introduces **Luke 14:27** (§70) by saying, "the Lord (says), according to the ancient copies" (iuxta antiqua exemplaria). Jerome offers no further comments on the verse or its omission in some MSS, but the fact

[37] Matthew 13:35 is an interesting case here because in *Hom.* 11,Jerome does mention "all of the oldest manuscripts" (in omnibus ueteribus codicibus), but it is not clear that he's seen such MSS rather than is making an assumption based on his own conjectural emendation (see discussion and footnote, above). Even if the latter is true, this still provides an example of the weight and authority Jerome places on the oldest MSS, whether still extant or not.

that he quotes the verse suggests that he accepts the witness of the older copies and relies on their authority in including the verse.[38]

The quality that Jerome attributes to the earliest copies becomes even more apparent in his discussions of **Matt 5:22**.[39] In his treatise *Against the Pelagians* (§9), Jerome states that the phrase "without cause" is lacking from many of the oldest copies (in plerisque antiquis codicibus). When he discusses the same variant in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8), Jerome says that certain manuscripts (in quibusdam codicibus) add the phrase "without cause," but in the genuine copies (in ueris), the phrase is lacking. While Jerome does not specify here what qualifies a MS as more "true" or "genuine," by comparing the two discussions it becomes implicit that the "oldest" copies are also the "truest" copies because they hold what he determines is the most accurate reading. It should be noted, though, that Jerome does not base his textual decision here solely on external evidence (for more on this variant, see below); however, his preference for the reading found in what he terms the oldest and best copies underlines the value that he places on such evidence.

Jerome refers to the "genuine" or "most authentic" MSS on a couple of other occasions as well. At **Matt 21:31** (§36; see above), Jerome again does not offer criteria for what makes the manuscript or reading more genuine (in ueris exemplaribus). In this example, his value judgment shows a preference for one reading over the other, yet he still offers an interpretation for both readings. In his commentary on **Titus 3:15** (§173), Jerome includes the Greek evidence, stating that the Greek manuscripts (in Graecis

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[38] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 183.

[39] Metzger, "Practice of Textual Criticism," 343; idem, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 180.

codicibus) have a shorter version of the doxology, so that neither “Lord” nor “our” is present in the most authentic texts (in libris feratur authenticis). Again, Jerome does not explain his reasoning behind what makes the reading or its MS more “authentic,” but he implies by connection with the Greek copies that the more original version (i.e., the original language) is more authentic than the derivative.

At other times, Jerome refers to the bulk of witnesses in favor of a variant. Although Jerome appeals to **John 7:53-8:11** (§87) only briefly in his writing *Against the Pelagians* as an example of someone who is punished according to the law, he notes that this account is present in most of the Greek and Latin copies (in multis et Graecis et Latinis codicibus).[40] Implicitly, the presence of the pericope in the majority of MSS validates his use of it as proof of his point. Shortly before this, in the same work, Jerome uses the combination of the Greek and Latin evidence in a similar way. Citing **Luke 22:43-44** (§75) as an example of Jesus needing the help of an angel, while Jerome refers only to “some copies” (in quibusdam exemplaribus), they include both Greek and Latin, and together these witnesses implicitly justify his use of the passage.[41] Likewise, using **Rom 16:25-27** (§119) as scriptural proof for his argument on a passage in Ephesians, Jerome prefaces his quotation that these verses are present in most copies (in plerisque codicibus) of Romans.[42] Again, he does not focus on the evidence for the reading or discuss the validity of the text, but his quotation of it offers it legitimacy, with the only basis offered being that of the bulk of the MS evidence.

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[40] Metzger, “St Jerome’s Explicit References,” 183.

[41] Metzger, “St Jerome’s Explicit References,” 183.

[42] Metzger, “St Jerome’s Explicit References,” 184.

Some other examples where Jerome refers to the majority of the witnesses have already been discussed above. At **Matt 5:22** (§9), Jerome appeals not only to the oldest or most genuine copies, but to the majority of them (in plerisque antiquis codicibus). Alternately, at **Matt 16:2-3** (§29), even though Jerome states that these verses are lacking in most manuscripts (in plerisque codicibus), he still sees fit to offer an exegesis for them (presumably because they are present in his lemma, and he is aware they may be present in the copies used by his audience as well).[43] Therefore, the accumulation of external evidence alone is not enough to determine what text Jerome will include or comment upon, although he will use it to justify his appropriation of certain verses as necessary.

In addition to citing the MS evidence, Jerome sometimes refers to the opinions of various fathers on a variant. In *Ep.* 119, Jerome discusses at length **1 Cor 15:51** (§131).[44] Although at the end of the letter he briefly mentions that there is a version known only in the Latin ("we will all rise again"), his discussion throughout the letter pertains only to the two Greek readings, "we will all sleep, but we will not all be changed," and the opposite, "we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed." Jerome quotes from or summarizes the commentaries of a number of fathers on these verses, although only two of them explicitly discuss the variants (Didymus and Acacius). Jerome does not lay out his own opinion between the readings, nor does he specify how the MS evidence lies (only that the second of these two readings is in some copies [quaedam exemplaria] and that both are found in the Greek manuscripts [in Graecis codicibus inuenitur]). The

[43] Another example is at **Mark 16:9ff.** (§57), where Jerome refers to the longer ending of Mark lacking from nearly all of the Greek manuscripts (omnibus Graeciae libris paene); however, here he is merely repeating Eusebius from his *Quaestiones ad Marinum.*

[44] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 185.

quotation of the fathers, however, serves as his external evidence, and his own preference may be implied by the greater space he gives to Didymus and Acacius, who both argue for the first of the two readings based on internal evidence (particularly the meaning of v. 52).

Jerome also cites the evidence of previous fathers much more briefly. Commenting on **Gal 3:1** (§140), Jerome notes while some manuscripts (in quibusdam codicibus) have the line "Who bewitched you not to believe in the truth?" it is lacking from the copies of Origen (in exemplaribus Adamantii), and thus he chooses also to omit this variant.[45] If Jerome is following Origen's own commentary on this biblical book, as he often does, he may be following Origen's own lemma, which apparently Jerome is aware to be in contradiction with other (perhaps Latin) copies that do include the phrase. Otherwise, Jerome is following a lemma that lacks the sentence, and he finds the combination of his lemma and the evidence of Origen to outweigh the other copies that contain the line. But on another occasion, the patristic evidence, while persuasive to Jerome, is not enough to warrant overlooking the variant. At **Matt 24:36** (§39), Jerome notes that some Latin copies (in quibusdam latinis codicibus) add "nor the Son," whereas the Greek copies, and most of all Origen and Pierius (in graecis et maxime Adamantii et Pierii exemplaribus), lack the variant.[46] But then Jerome explains that because the phrase is found in some copies, it seems worth discussing it. As he continues, his real reason becomes clear: this phrase has been much abused by heretics such as Arius, and so even though Jerome finds the MS evidence to weigh against including the variant, he cannot

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[45] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 185.

[46] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 182.

pass it by without discussion. He then essentially validates the reading by arguing for an orthodox understanding of it, based rather on the internal evidence (other scriptural proofs and the rule of faith).

While in many of these examples, Jerome does not express an explicit preference between the two readings he presents, at other times he is quite clear in his verdict. **Matthew 5:22**, discussed above, is perhaps the best example of this, especially in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8), where he says that the incorrect reading should be deleted. At **Eph 3:14** (§148), Jerome likewise states how the text should be read.[47] While the Latin copies (in Latinis codicibus) add the phrase "of our Lord Jesus Christ," Jerome says that this phrase should not be included, since it shifts the meaning of the text (adding Jesus as an intermediary, so that the Father is the father of Jesus, instead of the father of all fathers and families on earth). Although Jerome does not state that he is following the Greek reading, it is implicit since he mentions the Latin, and since he is largely following Origen's commentary throughout this work. At **Eph 1:6** (§146), however, Jerome has a slightly different approach. He says that the phrase added in the Latin copies (in Latinis codicibus), "beloved Son" should not be read, but simply "beloved" (again, by implication, in agreement with the Greek and likely Origen's commentary). But Jerome does use the variant as an occasion for further commentary, and even his own suggestions of what words should be added to the text there if anything is to be added. While he is not exactly exegeting the variant, it is also not in contradiction to the meaning of the text, so he uses it as an occasion for further discussion.

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[47] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 185-86.

In some cases, just as at Matt 24:36 (see above), the reading in the text had much greater implications in a controversy or polemical argument. At **1 Cor 9:5** (§121), therefore, Jerome appeals to the Greek evidence to help determine, in response to Jovinian, whether or not the apostles had wives.[48] Here, the Greek evidence may be used in two ways: first, the Latin reads "women or wives" (mulieres vel uxores); as Jerome explains, one Greek term can mean either of these words, so an appeal to the Greek shows that "wives" is actually an interpretive addition in the Latin. Second, the Greek contains a reading that the Latin does not; in the Greek copies (in Graecis codicibus), Jerome finds "sisters," which he finds to show that the reading "wives" is incorrect. He reinforces this with internal evidence from Scripture, actually appealing to an OT passage to give an example of patronage by a woman (as Jerome finds to be the case with these "sisters" who are supporting the apostles). Thus, the correct reading of the text, following the Greek evidence, has great significance in this argument, so that the verse cannot simply be read either way.

It is clear, therefore, that while Jerome frequently attests MS evidence for one reading or another, he also makes use of different forms of internal evidence to determine the value of a variant. One case where application of internal evidence is the most explicit is in his entertaining anecdote regarding **Eph 5:14** (§153). Jerome tells the story of a preacher who told a rousing sermon (received with boisterous applause and stomping by the audience) that made use of a variant reading, "Christ will touch you." While Jerome points out that the preacher's audience obviously appreciated the creative exegesis, he says he will leave it to the reader to determine what is the correct reading

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[48] Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References," 184-85.

and interpretation. However, he does not simply leave it at that; Jerome gets in his final dig. While he may leave the decision to the reader, he also says that there's one thing he knows about the preacher's reading: it doesn't fit the context or meaning of the passage. Thus, Jerome is expressing his preference for the correct reading ("Christ will shine on you") based on internal evidence, the immediate context. Jerome mentions no MSS here, so it appears that his only knowledge of the variant is from this sermon. Implicitly, then, he has very meager external evidence by which to weigh the variant, but the judgment he expresses is based on the context within Ephesians.

In summary, although at times Jerome depended on the knowledge of textual variants by his predecessors, it is clear that he was concerned for the quality of the text and therefore made frequent mention of variants. While his primary concern was establishing the best Latin translation, he applied his knowledge of Greek both by comparing the Latin against the Greek readings, by noting variations within the Greek tradition, and by bringing in the testimony of Greek scholars. Jerome at times stated clear preference for a particular variant, but even when he had a preference, he still felt the pastoral need to explain the meaning of the alternate reading, based on the reality that some would accept his rejected reading as Scripture. But, like Origen before him, Jerome also frequently allowed two readings to stand, sometimes merely mentioning them, other times offering an interpretation for both. Also, like Origen, Jerome did not trust the quality of scribal activity, which limited his trust in the external evidence. Where Jerome did place trust was in the Greek over the Latin, in the oldest MSS, and in the testimony of other scholars (such as Origen and Pierius). However, even his doubt about the quality of the copies did not keep him from appealing to the majority reading, especially when the

reading was found in both Greek and Latin copies. He also made frequent use of internal evidence, arguing primarily from the immediate context or other Scripture.[49] In the end, though, it was always the meaning and use of the text that was of prime importance, so that Jerome most often simply laid out the textual information for the reader to decide (just as he laid out the interpretations of various commentators side by side), only arguing decisively against a particular reading if accepting it might lead the reader astray.

7. Pelagius

In the handful of instances where Pelagius mentions a variant reading, he typically only mentions it in passing and treats it as a valid alternative to the lemma. He includes no discussion of the Greek copies, and while he does mentions MSS, his evidence usually refers to variations only in the Latin tradition. The one example of a variant from the Greek tradition is at **Rom 12:13** (§115). Pelagius begins by citing the lemma that we should contribute to the "needs" of the saints. After a brief explanation of what this means, he comments that "certain manuscripts" (quidam codices) read instead to contribute to the "remembrance" of the saints. He simply treats the lemma and variant as valid alternates, offering a brief explanation for the variant text, that we should remember and imitate the example of the saints. He then passes on to the next scriptural phrase without further comment.[50]

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[49] See also the summary by Metzger ("St Jerome's Explicit References," 187-88), who affirms "Jerome's sagacity as a textual critic" and says that when Jerome does choose between variants, "it is usually for reasons that would be recognized today as valid and persuasive." Metzger also compares the readings that Jerome prefers with the readings that appear in the Vulgate, noting several differences between the two.

[50] The majority of Pelagius' discussion of alternate readings are based on variations in the Latin translations rather than attested variants, but he deals with both in a similar fashion. At **Col 3:15** (§163),

8. Augustine

Although Augustine did not undertake the monumental task of retranslating the Scriptures into Latin as did Jerome, he did share the same opinion on the abundance, and inferiority, of the Latin translations and therefore the need to appeal to the Greek. This is why he advises all students of Scripture to learn Greek (and Hebrew), or at the very least to get hold of some rigorously literal translations, in order to compare and correct the translations themselves.[51] Thus, the first task of the exegete should be to "devote their careful attention and their skill [to] the correction of their copies, so that the uncorrected ones give way to the corrected ones."[52] While in the case of the OT, Augustine was embroiled in a debate over the Hebrew versus the LXX as the best textual authority, there was no comparable conflict over the foundation for the NT translations. He recommended, then, that for the NT one should appeal simply to the authority of "the Greek," and when further discernment was needed, to the copies of the "more learned and careful" (doctiores et diligentiores) churches.[53]

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just as at Rom 12:13, he briefly explains the lemma then mentions a variation "in some copies" (in nonnullis exemplaribus) which he exegetes before passing on to the next part of the text. Likewise, in **1 Cor 10:22** (§122), he first gives little to no attention to the lemma (there is only a one word response in the critical edition, in brackets, which is simply a repetition of the verb from the lemma to provide an answer to Paul's rhetorical question), then mentions a variation (possibly even a marginal gloss) in "other manuscripts" (alii codices) and offers an explanation for it. In **2 Thess 2:3** (§164), Pelagius begins his exegesis of the lemma, then comments that there is another reading elsewhere in the Latin copies (in Latinis exemplaribus)—the only example where he is explicit about limiting the variant to the Latin tradition (with the implication that it is merely a matter of translation). He continues with his exegesis, then, explaining that both readings yield the same meaning.

[51] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.11 (16)-15 (22). See further the discussion in Chapter 1, above.

[52] "nam codicibus emendandis primitus debet inuigilare solertia eorum, qui scripturas diuinas nosse desiderant, ut emendatis non emendati cedant ex uno dumtaxat interpretationis genere uenientes." E. Hill, trans., *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana* (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996), 139.

[53] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 15 (22); cf. Hill, *Teaching Christianity*, 140.

This practice of establishing the best quality text became especially important when the reading, or inclusion, of a passage came into question, particularly in theological disputes. Augustine thus laid out further criteria for how to assess the most accurate or authoritative version of the text. In response to Faustus the Manichean, Augustine accuses that such heretics at times excise parts of the text, and when asked for proof to validate this decision, they offer up only their own opinions rather than appealing to the truer, majority of, or more ancient MSS, or the original language.[54] Augustine delineates instead what should be the proper recourse for establishing or defending a particular reading: first consult the MSS from other regions, and, if these disagree, rely upon the majority or more ancient of the copies. If uncertainty remains after this, go back to the original language.[55] In a letter to Jerome, Augustine further explains that, unlike himself and Jerome, these heretics do not hold to the authority of those portions of Scripture that disagree with them; instead they claim the text to be in error. However, he asserts, they have not been able to prove this with either more numerous or older manuscripts (nec pluribus sive antiquioribus exemplaribus) or by appealing to the original language (nec praecedentis linguae auctoritate; *Ep.* 82).

Comparing these various comments by Augustine, a basic hierarchy of criteria for adducing evidence for a disputed text can be detected. First, one should consult the

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[54] Augustine, *Faust.* 11.2 (ad exemplaria veriora, vel plurimum codicum, vel antiquorum, vel linguae praecedentis [CSEL 25:315])

[55] "Itaque si de fide exemplarium quaestio verteretur, sicut in nonnullis, quae et paucae sunt, et sacrarum Litterarum studiosis notissimae sententiarum varietates; vel ex aliarum regionum codicibus, unde ipsa doctrina commeavit, nostra dubitatio dijudicaretur, vel si ibi quoque codices variarent, plures paucioribus, aut vetustiores recentioribus praeferrentur: et si adhuc esset incerta varietas, praecedens lingua, unde illud interpretatum est, consuleretur" (Augustine, *Faust.* 11.2). Toward the end of the same document, Augustine reiterates this point, that evidence for or against spurious readings is to be found by recourse to either older manuscripts or the language upon which the translation was based (vel de antiquioribus, vel de lingua praecedente; Augustine, *Faust.* 32.16).

majority of or more ancient MSS (in one's own tongue), or the MSS of the majority of and more important churches. If these leave the reading still in doubt, then one should turn to the language from which these copies were translated (i.e., the Greek). Note that Augustine does not place the appeal to the original language first, but second (or even last). This is likely based on two factors: (1) his recognition that not everyone in the debate would have facility with the original language (just as he suggested that students of Scripture could use multiple literal Latin translations if they did not know Greek or Hebrew); (2) his respect for the authority of the church and church tradition, so that a reading, simply because it may be found in a Greek MS, should never trump the established teaching of the church. While he does show respect for the authority of the teaching (and thus the implied coherence within Scripture), it is noteworthy that he places his emphasis on the external evidence, the MSS of the churches, as the more objective basis to provide a common ground in textual disputes.

Augustine's respect for authority is seen particularly in his approach to the text and its authorship. As he points out to Jerome, the key difference between their own orthodox approach and that of the heretics is the assumption of the text's authority (and infallibility). Thus, he explains to Faustus, if a difficulty is encountered in Scripture, it is not because the author is in error; instead, one should assume either the manuscript is faulty, the translation is incorrect, or the reader has misunderstood (sed, aut codex mendosus est, aut interpres erravit, aut tu non intellegis; *Faust.* 11.5).[56] The recourse to

[56] Augustine makes the same point to Jerome (in part to illustrate how he approaches the infallible authority of Scripture differently from his approach to Jerome's own work): if Augustine encounters a difficulty in the scriptural text, he supposes that either the manuscript is faulty, the translator has not grasped the meaning, or he himself has failed to understand it (vel mendosum esse codicem, vel interpretem non assecutum esse quod dictum est, vel me minime intellexisse; Augustine, *Ep.* 82).

the majority of copies, or the oldest or most authoritative will help clarify the first point (a faulty MS), and consulting the Greek will help clarify the second (faulty translation). Therefore, it is by establishing the best text and translation that Augustine may arrive at a firm foundation for the third point: if the text itself is not in error, then the reader (in this case, his opponent, a Manichean) must be. This illustrates the important role the diversity of readings or translations could play in theological disputes, and therefore why Augustine emphasized that Christian scholars should be discerning about the text that they read and interpret.

While Augustine did not address textual variations as frequently as did Jerome, there are throughout Augustine's writings examples of how he applied his delineated criteria to the NT text. Most commonly he put into practice the simple principle of comparing MSS, or comparing the Latin to the Greek.[57] But does he rely on the Greek evidence alone to choose between readings, or even depend wholly on the external evidence, as his criteria would suggest? It is in application that we see the true relevance of authority (either in the coherence of Scripture, or in the rule of faith) most emerge, along with another point that lies behind his enumeration of criteria: the MS evidence need only decide between readings where there is truly a conflict present. If divergent readings do not pose a problem for understanding the larger context, then Augustine may pass over the variant as easily as do Origen or Jerome.

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[57] Since the focus of this study is on variants in the Greek tradition, the data is necessarily skewed in that direction and overlooks the larger question of when Augustine simply compared Latin readings to establish the best translation (which is the first of the two steps he outlines). For a better examination of Augustine's comparison of and changes to the Latin text, see A. Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927), 147-48; D. de Bruyne. *Saint Augustin: Reviseur de la Bible* (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931).

There are numerous examples where Augustine appeals to the Greek MSS when noting a variant reading. For instance, at **Rom 7:18** (§108) he quotes the Latin text and then comments briefly that the Greek copies (codices Graeci) have a slightly shorter version. This does not appear to impact his exegesis, however, as he again quotes the Latin version shortly thereafter, although the word in question (invenio) does not factor into his exegesis. What is implicit here, Augustine makes explicit in his discussion of **Matt 5:22** (§7): although there is a different reading in the Greek copies (codices . . . Greci)—here, the omission of the phrase "without cause"—the difference in reading does not change the meaning of the passage. Therefore, he feels the difference is worth noting, but he does not need to choose between the readings since either will lead to the same understanding of the context.

In **1 Cor 15:51**, Augustine twice addresses the variant but finds that, if anything, the variant helps to clarify the meaning of the text. In *Ep.* 193 (§128), he quotes the reading "we will all rise," which appears in most manuscripts (in plerisque codicibus), but states that some copies (nonnulli codices) read "we will all sleep." He does not weigh the value of the readings or the evidence, but finds that the variant clarifies his original quotation, since it is necessary first to "sleep," or to die, before one may be resurrected. Later, in *Ep.* 205 (§129), Augustine elaborates on the MS evidence. It is not merely some copies, but the Greek copies (Graeci codices), that have the variant. However, in this latter case, he offers no judgment or explanation for the two readings, but simply notes the variant in passing. The presence of the variant in the Greek therefore makes it worth mentioning, and it is still valuable for understanding the larger

passage, but Augustine does not find that it alters the meaning enough to warrant rejecting either reading.

In these cases, Augustine refers simply to "the Greek," but on other occasions he shows more sensitivity to the variety within the Greek tradition. Here, he applies also his first criterion, an appeal to the majority of or most ancient MSS. In two different writings, Augustine addresses the variant at **Rom 5:14** (§§104, 105), and in both places presents the same basic argument: his lemma includes the negative (those who have *not* sinned), whereas some of the Latin copies do not, but this does not change the meaning of the verse (sinning like Adam—i.e., original sin); moreover, the majority of copies in Greek—which is the language from which the Latin copies were translated—include the negative, so this reading will stand. Augustine highlights several things in this argument: (1) the Greek tradition itself is not without diversity, but the majority of the copies contain this reading; (2) the Greek copies are the basis for the Latin translation and therefore, by implication, take precedence; (3) however, whether the negative is present or not, the verse still refers to the concept of original sin and, in the context of this argument, has the same meaning either way. Thus, while based on #3, the internal evidence is ambiguous, ##1-2 tip the scales in favor of his lemma, based on the external evidence of the Greek.

At **Matt 6:4** (§16), he similarly appeals to the Greek to corroborate his lemma. After exegeting the verse, he notes that many Latin copies (multa Latina exemplaria) add "publicly," but he does not find this phrase in the Greek—which is prior (i.e., which is the basis for the Latin translation, and thus takes precedence)—and therefore does not feel it is worth commenting on the phrase. At **Luke 3:22** (§65), Augustine appeals also

to the age of the Greek MSS. In this context, he is comparing the words spoken from heaven at the baptism of Jesus in the various Synoptic accounts, explaining how their differences are not contradictory for our understanding of the event. However, there is one reading that does stand out as contradictory, which is a variant found in some copies (nonnulli codices [presumably Latin, but perhaps both Greek and Latin]) saying, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you." He points out that this is not the reading found in the more ancient Greek copies (in antiquioribus codicibus Graecis); but, he adds, if the reading is found in any reputable manuscripts (si aliquibus fide dignis exemplaribus confirmari possit), then is must be given serious consideration as a second statement made at the baptism. Since, however, Augustine does not dwell on this reading, it seems that he is merely giving it a nod rather than serious consideration.

For **Phil 3:3** (§158), Augustine notes that his lemma appears both in most of the Latin copies (plures . . . codices . . . latini) and in almost all of the Greek copies (graeci autem omnes aut paene omnes). He then adds that some Latin copies (in nonnullis autem exemplaribus latinis) have a variant, but he swiftly rejects this as an incorrect reading (errant), based on weightier authority (auctoritati grauiori)—presumably, that authority is the bulk of the MSS, although the lemma better corroborates the theological point Augustine is making, so it implicitly has the agreement of internal evidence since it fits the rule of faith and thus the scriptural context. But here again, he has noted not only the Greek copies, but the majority of the Greek copies, along with the majority of the Latin, in order to determine the validity of a variant.

In the examples mentioned so far, Augustine has often referred to the Greek MSS, in whole or in part, as external evidence for a reading. On other occasions, though, he

refers simply to MSS in general, or to a variant, without specifying that there is Greek support for the reading. In many of these instances, we again see that Augustine ultimately looks toward the internal evidence, or the meaning of the text, and chooses to let both readings stand if they will not affect the exegesis. In **John 16:13** (§90), there is a variant that Augustine cites a few times in his *Tractates on John*. On the first mention, he quotes the verse as saying that the Spirit will "teach," but then he notes a variant in other copies (alii codices) that reads, the Spirit will "guide." This prompts Augustine immediately to quote from Ps 85:11, which begins, "Guide me." However, he does not otherwise discern between the readings. In fact, on almost every mention of the verse, he gives both readings with a simple "or" (vel) between them. At the end of this portion of the commentary, Augustine paraphrases the verse, this time using "teach" without adding the alternate reading. But when he summarizes the passage once more later on, he again offers both readings side-by-side, quoting "teach" first, but adding that some copies (in nonnullis codicibus) have "guide." Although his lemma appears to have "teach," and therefore this reading has a slight preference, he clearly finds both variations of equal value, and both useful in his exegesis. In the end, then, it is left for the reader to choose between them.

At other times, it may seem that there is more at stake between two variants, or that they are inherently contradictory, so that a deeper examination is required. As in the case of Rom 5:14 (see above), so also at **Col 2:18** (§161), one variant reading has a negative particle while the alternate does not; yet, Augustine does not find an opposite reading necessarily contradictory in the context. For Col 2:18, he first quotes the verse with the negative, "teaching what he did not see," then he says that some copies (quidam

codices) read, “teaching what he saw.” Augustine then gives an exegesis for each reading, without choosing between them, although when he repeats the entire verse to move forward in the discussion, he quotes the first reading, with the negative. At **Mark 8:10** (§52), he is comparing Synoptic accounts and finds Matthew reads Magedan where Mark reads Dalmanutha—although some copies of Matthew (in quibusdam codicibus) agree with the reading in Mark. But the apparent contradiction is not a problem for Augustine, since he assumes that the same location could be referred to by two different names. This is corroborated by the external evidence that many copies (plerique codices), including copies of Mark, have only Magedan. In this case, the copies of Mark are treated as though a secondary witness to Matthew, so that one Gospel can be adduced as support for a variant in the other.

Augustine offers a similar argument for **Matt 10:3** (§23); he is comparing the Synoptic lists of the disciples and notes that where Luke has Judas the brother of James, Matthew has Thaddaeus, although some copies (nonnulli . . . codices) have Lebbaeus. But Augustine quickly passes over this as being of no consequence since one person may easily be known by two or three different names. His treatment of **Matt 5:32** (§11) shows another instance of comparing Synoptic versions as though they are variants. In response to an accusation that he has omitted a key phrase in the text of Matthew, he repeats the different versions of the comments on divorce and remarriage found throughout the Gospels, introducing them as the readings of various exemplars (nonnulla exemplaria). In the midst of this, Augustine also notes specifically the variant in Matthew as missing from some Greek and Latin copies (nonnulli codices et graeci et latini). However, once again, the overriding factor is that all of these phrases say

essentially the same thing. As long as he can explain the text in the same way with or without the phrase he has been accused of overlooking, then he does not find it necessary to argue for the inclusion or omission of that portion of the text.

Augustine also is known to speculate on why a particular variant has found its way into the text. For **1 Cor 15:5** (§125), he is discussing Paul's reference to "the twelve" and notes that some manuscripts (nonnulli etiam codices) actually read "the eleven." While as a reference to the apostles, this is more accurate at the time of the resurrection appearances, he conjectures that this reading may have been an emendation by those who considered a reference to twelve of them to be incorrect at this point. Augustine, however, does not find "the twelve" to be a problematic reading, because either Paul could be referring to a different group of disciples, or the number itself has come to be symbolic as representing the entire complement of disciples, despite their exact numbering. Whatever the explanation, though, again, Augustine returns to the point that none of these suggestions are contradictory to the truth; while his preference for the text seems to lean toward his initial citation, "the twelve," he does not settle on merely one explanation nor argue that the variant containing a different number is incorrect—as long as whatever reading or interpretation is accepted stands up to the measure of truth and the rule of faith.

In the case of **John 7:53-8:11** (§84), however, Augustine does find a problem, and therefore speculates that the pericope has been intentionally removed by some people. He accuses that men of weak faith, or who are hostile to the faith, have deleted the story of the woman caught in adultery from their copies out of fear that the example of that woman's pardon would give their own wives license to sin. Augustine retorts that

they have taken the command to go and sin no more as permission to sin, or as offensive to those who are equally guilty but not equally pardoned. Unlike many other cases noted above, Augustine does not here make clear reference to the MS evidence, but he clearly assumes the common or proper reading to be an inclusion of the pericope, and those who have deleted it are in error and have done so out of ignorance or malice. Thus, there are echoes here of Augustine's accusation against the heretics (see above) that they have taken liberties with the text without finding MS evidence to support their textual choices.

One final example of Augustine's discussion of NT variants has been saved for last because it is an interesting case. It particularly stands out as one of the closest examples of a modern text-critical argument. Without, of course, using this exact terminology, Augustine describes the rule of lectio difficilior in his evaluation of **Matt 27:9** (§41). He introduces the discussion by noting that some people may find the attribution of the quotation within the verse problematic, since it is introduced as by Jeremiah, while that is not the source of the quote. Augustine must address this because of how the possible error reflects on the evangelist. First, Augustine mentions that there is a variant here, and that not all copies of the Gospels (non omnes codices euangeliorum habere) read "Jeremiah" but some only "the prophet." This would be the simplest solution, and we could assume that the copies reading "Jeremiah" are in error (codices esse mendosos) since the other copies are more accurate.

However, Augustine is not satisfied with this explanation because of the overwhelming external evidence in favor of the reading "Jeremiah": not only do the majority of manuscripts (plures codices) contain this variant, but also those who study Greek report that it is found in the oldest Greek copies (in antiquioribus Graecis) (it is

interesting here that Augustine acknowledges he is indebted to others for this insight about the Greek evidence). Moreover, he does not see a reason why this more difficult reading would be added to the text later, creating a problem in the text, while it is much easier to understand the reverse, why someone would delete the more problematic reading.[58] Based on the external evidence, including the lectio difficilior, Augustine therefore determines that "Jeremiah" is the correct reading, but that leaves him with his original conundrum: why Matthew would attribute a quotation from Zechariah to Jeremiah, and what that says about Matthew himself. As pointed out above, Augustine assumes as his basis that the text is authoritative and therefore the evangelist could not be in error.

The first recourse Augustine enumerated is to determine if the manuscript is faulty (codex mendosus est)—this is exactly where he has started here, using the same language (codices esse mendosos). However, he has dismissed this possibility, so he must go on to find another interpretation. His next two steps were to determine if the translation is wrong (which, in the case of a proper name, is not an issue), or if the reader has misunderstood, so he is left with this final point of making proper sense of the difficult reading. Augustine comes up with two explanations: either the Holy Spirit guided Matthew to put this difficulty in the text to point out that all prophets speak through the same voice (so that the words of Zechariah and Jeremiah ultimately come from the same source), or that the quoted passage is a conflation of Jeremiah and

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[58] Augustine either does not consider, or implicitly rejects, the explanation by Jerome (in *Hom.* 11 on Ps 77 LXX; see §43 and especially §27): that the error was introduced early on by a scribe who was ignorant of the Scriptures and entered the familiar name of Jeremiah, not realizing that the quote was actually from Zechariah. But both Jerome and Augustine build from the same basic presupposition that the author of the Gospel was not incorrect in what he originally wrote.

Zechariah. While not all modern scholars would agree with Augustine's final solutions, or the presuppositions that led him there, the first part of his discussion remains a shining example of critical scholarship: Augustine has weighed the MS evidence (the majority of MSS and the oldest Greek MSS) along with the logic of how each variant could have emerged, and he has deduced that the original reading is the most difficult one, despite how that challenges his theological presuppositions about the authority and consistency of the scriptural text.

This last example also stands out because it is unique, not only among ancient scholarship, but also among the variants discussed by Augustine himself. In those situations where he systematically addresses how variations in the translations or copies should be evaluated, Augustine lays out a clear hierarchy of external evidence as an objective basis for comparison—the majority, oldest, or most authoritative texts, or the Greek over the Latin. While, in practice, he frequently makes note of the MS evidence when mentioning a variant, sometimes weighing it in terms of Greek versus Latin, or the majority of or oldest copies, most often the ultimate verdict on the text is determined by the internal evidence, or the meaning of the variants within the context. As long as a reading is not untrue or does not alter the orthodox understanding of the context, Augustine is content to allow either reading to stand, even if the two variants appear contradictory on the surface. In this, he is every bit the churchman, like Origen and Jerome before him. While they were scholars of the text, they all had to contend with the reality that those "other copies" that contained an alternate reading were accepted and used as the Scripture of the church—and it was simply more practical to guide the

audience of those copies into a proper understanding of the passage than to debate with them the exact reading of the text.

CHAPTER 4

NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL VARIANTS DISCUSSED BY MULTIPLE CHURCH FATHERS

While investigating the variants discussed by each individual author allows a greater understanding of how they each dealt with textual matters, lining up discussions of the same variant by multiple authors illuminates how specific textual issues were addressed over the course of time and in different places. Most importantly, it also reveals the common pattern of passing along traditions and dependency on earlier scholars, so that what may at first glance appear to be multiple treatments of the same passage actually turns out to be a single discussion of the text that has been repeated many times. It is possible as well to see where there are trends or reactions in the treatment of specific variants, or how the opinions on their inclusion or rejection may have changed over time. Listing out the texts in this way also gives an insight as to which textual variations were of the most interest to patristic writers or most often warranted discussion.

The passages considered below are those for which two or more fathers (with generally reliable attribution, and of an early rather than medieval date) have discussed a variant. All paragraph numbers (e.g., §22) are cross-references to the Catalogue. For an

overall summary of trends in how the fathers deal with the external and internal evidence, see Chapters 5 and 6.

1. Matthew 5:22

The variant in this verse qualifies the judgment against one who is angry with a brother, adding the phrase "without cause" (εἰκῇ). A number of fathers addressed this variant, focusing primarily on the internal coherence of Scripture and the exegetical implications of the variant. For example, a scholion on Ephesians attributed to Origen (§10) departs from Origen's frequent practice of exegeting both readings and argues strongly against the veracity of the plus. The commentary on Eph 4:31 is used as an occasion to explain the proper reading in Matthew as allowing for no instance of righteous or excused anger. Thus Eph 4:31 (along with Ps 36:8 LXX) is used as evidence to show, based on the internal evidence of other Scripture, that "without cause" is wrongly added to the text of Matthew. However, there is no explicit mention of the MS evidence, or its weight or quality, suggesting that it is of no consequence in excluding the variant.

Similarly, Jerome uses the internal criterion of Scripture as his primary argument against including the phrase "without cause" (sine causa). He addresses the variant twice, first in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8), where his lemma excludes the phrase, and later in *Against the Pelagians* (§9), using a lemma that includes the phrase. However, on both occasions his determination is the same, that the phrase should be omitted from the text. In both contexts, Jerome refers to this verse in the context of other scriptural references on anger, and in the *Commentary*, he especially uses scriptural texts (Luke 6; James 1:20) to argue that there is no allowance made for anger. In the

apologetic context of *Against the Pelagians,* Jerome is more brief, only mentioning the variant in passing, but he still makes a point of emphasizing that the phrase does not belong in the text. He does, however, mention the MS evidence behind each reading. While some copies (in quibusdam codicibus) include the phrase, the most authentic (in ueris) and oldest copies (in plerisque codicibus antiquis) omit it. Jerome therefore determines, based on the weight of both internal and external evidence, that the phrase should be deleted (radendum est) from the MSS.

Shortly after Jerome, Augustine also weighed in on the variant (§7). He revisits the verse in his *Retractions*, pointing out that although in previous discussions of Matthew 5 he had assumed “without cause” to be included in the text, he has since become aware that the phrase is lacking in the Greek MSS. For Augustine, the Greek text has overriding authority over the Latin, and so the only evidence he cites here is external. Ultimately, however, Augustine is not concerned with the authenticity of the phrase, as he proceeds to stress that whether or not the phrase is included does not change the meaning or his exegesis of the verse. Rather than emphasizing the qualification on righteous anger, he focuses on the distinction between being angry with the brother or with the brother’s sin, and thus the variant is of no consequence to his discussion.

Additional mentions of the variant among the patristic texts reinforce the persistence of the variant and the general consensus that the phrase should be omitted based on external and internal grounds. A fragmentary scholion attributed to Apollinaris (§5) is primarily concerned with interpreting the verse in terms of the law versus the spirit, but seems to assume that the phrase is included in the lemma and pauses to note that “Theodore and Theodore” (likely Theodore of Heraclea and Theodore of

Mopsuestia)[1] treat the phrase as secondary. A spurious letter attributed to Athanasius (§6) provides a more detailed discussion, again arguing for the omission of the phrase based on the exegesis of other scriptural texts. The argument is more implicit than explicit since the entire context is emphasizing, based on a string of scriptural references (most immediately, Rom 2:15-16), that God allows no excuse for anger since he wishes to remove the root of anger from the heart. The variant is then mentioned not as part of the lemma but as an addition, citing external evidence to further supporting its exclusion by commenting that the accurate manuscripts (τῶν ἀντιγράφων τὰ ἀκριβῆ) lack the phrase. Overall, then, the fathers tend to argue against the inclusion of the phrase, although the MS evidence shows that the variant remained, especially through transmission into the Latin tradition.

2. Matthew 8:28//Mark 5:1//Luke 8:26

Origen (§21) uses his discussion of this set of variants as an example of how the Greek MSS are often unreliable when it comes to Aramaic names, here referring specifically to place names. Notably, he does not assign the variants to a particular Gospel, which highlights two points: he is not concerned with external evidence (and so makes no mention of the MSS behind each reading), and he expects all three Gospels to have the same original reading. Origen focuses instead exclusively on internal evidence, relying on geography and etymology to determine the most accurate reading. First, using his knowledge of Palestinian geography, he excludes two variants as being an impossible

[1] Cf. J. Reuss, *Matthäus-Kommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche* (TU 61; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), 6. Both Theodores composed commentaries on Matthew, extant now only through the catenae.

location for the story. Then, after choosing a third reading, he uses etymology to strengthen the argument that this is the correct location for this event. In the midst of his discussion, Origen takes care to point out that the evangelists would not have made such an obvious mistake as to name an unviable location, so it is of the utmost importance not merely to allow for multiple readings with the same meaning (as Origen is comfortable to do elsewhere) but to defend the honor of the evangelists by isolating the correct reading.

Epiphanius (§20) likewise is interested in the veracity of the Gospels when addressing this variant, although his approach is different. Unlike Origen, Epiphanius assigns a reading to each Gospel, and then notes that there is also a variant in Matthew (which agrees with Luke's reading). In stark contrast to Origen's lengthy argument, Epiphanius's discussion is only a fleeting remark, but his emphasis is also geographical. Epiphanius is perfectly comfortable to allow all three readings to stand because the true location of the event was actually in the middle of the three locations. Therefore, in one brief statement, he is able to defend the truth of all three Gospels (and therefore all three evangelists). Because Epiphanius mentions each Gospel and its reading, the issue for him seems to be primarily one of harmonization rather than textual variety. However, the mention of the variant in Matthew shows that he is aware of variants even within an individual Gospel and considers this worth mentioning.

Following in the footsteps of Origen, Titus of Bostra (§22) quite literally builds upon Origen's argument. Although Titus does not acknowledge Origen as his source, he quotes from him extensively before expanding on his argument to make a slightly different point. Titus starts by emphasizing the value of the external evidence, referring to the accurate manuscripts (τὰ ἀκριβῆ ἔχει τῶν ἀντιγράφων) as containing

“Gergesenes,” which, notably, is the same reading that Origen determines to be authentic. This begs the question that often remains assumed and unaddressed by the fathers: what are the criteria for judging a reading or MS as “accurate”? In this context, it is a reasonable conclusion that the accuracy is determined based on Origen’s argument (and, thus, the external evidence is weighed based on an argument from the internal evidence) rather than on the overall quality of the copy (based on the exemplar, copyist, owner, location, etc.). While this should not universally be assumed to be the case, it does place an important qualification on how the fathers use the external evidence and weigh the value of the MSS.

After this initial comment, Titus then quotes from Origen, beginning in the middle of Origen’s argument with not the first but the second of the readings that Origen discards. At the end of the quotation, Titus expands the argument, pointing out in more detail how the etymological explanation agrees with the overall pericope, and then furthering the geographical argument. Titus therefore determines that more than one reading may be correct, since two of the locations border each other, and thus one is the place from which the pigs first came, and the other is where they ended up. Unfortunately, in this argument he seems to have overlooked the third reading (Gerasenes, which does appear initially as one of the three variants he notes, but then is omitted from his quotation of Origen), but his main point remains the same as Origen’s and Epiphanius’s, presenting an amalgamation of the two: regardless of the reading, the evangelists were not in error.

3. Matthew 11:19//Luke 7:35

Two Latin writers mention a variant in the Synoptic statement: “Wisdom is justified by her children,” or, “by her works.” Ambrose mentions the variant in his commentary on Luke (§66), where he refers in passing to a reading found in many of the Greek copies (plerique Graeci). Rather than reject the variant, he treats it as though it helps to further explain the lemma, and he essentially offers an exegesis for both readings. His interest, however, is in the rest of the pericope, so Ambrose quickly passes by this point without further dwelling on either reading.

Jerome deals with the sentence similarly in his commentary on Matthew (§24). After discussing the pericope and offering an explanation for how Jesus, the Wisdom of God, is justified by his “children” (the apostles), Jerome pauses to note the variant, “works.” Here, Jerome refers to “certain gospels” (in quibusdam euangeliis), which does not make clear whether he means “certain (copies of the) gospel (of Matthew),” or whether he has in mind the parallel in Luke. Since he uses the plural, he could actually be referring to a combination of both (i.e., the variant in copies of both Matthew and Luke). Also, Jerome does not specify, as does Ambrose, whether he knows of the variant in Greek or only in Latin. However, what is particularly interesting is that Jerome handles the variant text in the same way as Ambrose: he offers an exegesis for the alternate reading as though it helps to further explain the pericope. Therefore, for both writers, their primary interest in this commentary context was to convey the meaning of the text, and either reading was apparently acceptable as long as it adhered to the overall interpretation of the passage.

4. Matthew 13:35

The MS evidence known to us today has only two readings in this verse: the majority of the tradition reads "the prophet," while a few other witnesses read "the prophet Isaiah." Eusebius (§26) attests these same two variants, citing the first as his lemma, but then noting that some copies have the confusing reading "through the prophet Isaiah." He swiftly dismisses this reading, stating that the copies lacking "Isaiah" are the most accurate since the Scripture quotation clearly derives from Ps 77:2 (LXX), not Isaiah. Eusebius also discusses, only in passing, whether the "prophet" here is the very Asaph mentioned by the psalm. But what is merely a passing comment here is later cited by Jerome as concrete MS evidence.

Jerome's theory is that the original reading was "Asaph," which was "corrected" by an ignorant scribe from the unfamiliar name to the more well-known Isaiah. This inaccurate reading was then omitted by later, more knowledgeable scribes to yield simply "the prophet." In his *Commentary on Matthew* (§28), Jerome's description is similar to Eusebius's, in that the omission of a name is the lemma and "Isaiah" is the only known variant, while the explanation of "Asaph" as the original reading sounds more like Jerome's personal conjecture. But in *Hom.* 11 on Ps 77 (§27), Jerome states explicitly that "Asaph" is the reading in all of the oldest manuscripts (in omnibus ueteribus codicibus).[2] What remains unclear is whether Jerome has seen such MSS (he alone is

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[2] In the last few decades, the suggestion has arisen that Jerome's homilies on the Psalms are not his own but are his translation of Origen's homilies (see V. Peri, *Omelie origeniane sui Salmi: contributo all'identificazione del testo latino* [Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolic vaticana, 1980]; G. Coppa, *74 omelie sul libro dei Salmi* [Torino: Paoline, 1993], 11-32). In the case of *Hom.* 11, the mention of Porphyry and the negative attitude toward scribes suggest that even if the homily was originally Origen's, Jerome has added some of his own comments relating to the variants. But if Origen was responsible for the initial mention of the variant, this may account for potential differences between this text and Jerome's *Comm. Matt.*; one also wonders if the reference to the "oldest manuscripts" could be Jerome's interpretation of

currently the only evidence for this reading) or is using this language to describe what he understands must be the situation (that if this is the original reading, the oldest MSS surely all have this reading). In both Eusebius and Jerome, though, there is an inclination to accept Asaph as the prophet to whom Matthew is referring, based on a combination of internal evidence (appealing to the true source of the quotation, not the erroneous Isaiah) and external evidence (the more accurate or reliable, or perhaps oldest, copies).

5. Matthew 24:36

Certain variants surfaced especially in apologetics and controversies, and it was at times difficult for the writers to determine whether the opponents added a phrase or the orthodox omitted it and thereby created the variant. In Matt 24:36, both Ambrose and Jerome were aware of a textual addition or omission, that no one knows the day or hour, "not even the Son." Ambrose (§38) first quotes the verse as containing the phrase, then notes its omission only in the oldest Greek copies (veteres non habent codices graeci). Jerome (§39), however, cites the verse without the phrase, then he mentions that the phrase is added in some Latin copies (such as the one Ambrose was using, apparently), while it is lacking from some Greek MSS, as well as Origen and Pierius (in graecis et maxime Adamantii et Pierii exemplaribus).[3] But both authors are aware that Arius and

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Origen's reference to the MS evidence. However, it is impossible to know exactly to whom we should attribute which comments. Considering the dependence of both Eusebius and Jerome on the scholarship of Origen, it is easy to speculate that the initial discussion of this textual problem may have originated with Origen, whether in this homily or elsewhere.

[3] Interestingly, our current extant evidence supports an argument in the opposite direction, leading B. D. Ehrman (*The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christian Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* [New York: Oxford, 1993], 91-92) to draw the opposite conclusion as Ambrose, that the phrase was omitted, rather than added, for theological reasons.

his followers have made use of this phrase in arguing for the limitations of the Son, and so they must address the meaning.

Ambrose suggests that the addition of the phrase is an intentional corruption of the text by just such heretics as the Arians. Even so, he finds it necessary to explain what the phrase would mean if it were included in Scripture, and thus he argues that a distinction is being made between the Son of Man (Jesus's humanity) and the Son of God (Jesus's divinity). Jerome likewise would prefer to follow the authority of the Greek MSS and Origen and omit the phrase, but he realizes that its use by Arius and Eunomius must be addressed. Jerome therefore argues for the equality of the Father and the Son, on the one hand, but the mysteries that reside in Christ, on the other. In both instances, then, Ambrose and Jerome lean on the weight of external evidence, notably the Greek tradition, but also feel it necessary to argue based on internal evidence to show the coherence and orthodoxy of Scripture. This internal evidence, though, does not so much point them toward a preferred reading as allow them to illustrate how either reading can be accepted.

6. Matthew 27:9

A number of fathers note the discrepancy in the text, similar to Matt 13:35, where "Jeremiah the prophet" is cited as the source for a (paraphrased) quotation from Zechariah. Origen (§45), in Latin translation, says that the quote is found nowhere in the Jewish or Christian Scriptures, and therefore he believes that either the reading is a scribal error (replacing the original "Zechariah" with "Jeremiah") or the quote is drawn

from an apocryphal book of Jeremiah.[4] Eusebius (§42) does not raise this latter suggestion; he instead repeats the first idea, that a scribe may have made a mistake and replaced "Zechariah" with "Jeremiah." Eusebius adds the further suggestion that the scribal error may be in the transmission of Jeremiah, that someone may have intentionally deleted this part of the text. Jerome twice refers to the problem in this verse of Matthew. In his homily on Ps 77 (LXX) (§43), Jerome mentions Matt 27:9 in a list of places in the NT where a scribal error has corrupted the text due to the scriptural ignorance of the scribes.[5] In his *Commentary on Matthew* (§44), Jerome also mentions the problem, here stating that he has found the quotation in an apocryphal text of Jeremiah, but he still believes that Zechariah is the more likely source used by the evangelist (and therefore the original text would have read "Zechariah").

In all of these cases, the fathers have not actually referred to MS (external) evidence in support of an original reading of "Zechariah," nor have they attested knowledge of any extant reading in the MSS besides "Jeremiah." Looking to internal evidence, however, they have depended upon the accurate knowledge of the author (Matthew) and the internal coherence of Scripture to argue that the original reading must have been "Zechariah." These discussions have thus focused mainly on determining whether Zechariah is the true source of the quote or if Jeremiah could actually be correct. By their logic, if Zechariah is indeed the source, then Matthew must have originally read, "what was spoken by Zechariah the prophet."

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[4] Origen does not appear to be aware of any such passage in the secret book of Jeremiah (videat ne alicubi in secretis Hieremiae hoc prophetetur), but Jerome later says that he has read a copy of apocryphal Jeremiah and has found such a quote verbatim (see below).

[5] See n. 2, above, on Matt 13:35.

One other patristic voice does add external evidence to the conversation: Augustine (§41) notes that some MSS omit the name of the prophet altogether. Although he initially mentions such MSS seemingly in defense that the evangelist himself is not in error, Augustine them goes on to argue against accepting the omission as the original reading. In fact, his evaluation sounds much like the reasoning of a modern text critic: the earliest Greek evidence (in antiquioribus Graecis) includes "Jeremiah," and it is much more likely for a scribe to have deleted the incorrect name than added it to create a textual problem. Without describing it as such, Augustine has opted to accept the more difficult reading. Interestingly, he also does not discuss the primary argument of the fathers before him, especially Jerome in the context of his homily on Ps. 77: that even the earliest Greek copies are corrupt in reading "Jeremiah" because some of the earliest Christians were ignorant of the Scriptures and therefore introduced errors in their copying of the text.[6] But, like Augustine, none of these writers suggest that omitting the name of the prophet altogether is the correct reading.

7. Mark 16:9ff.

The ending of Mark is a well-known textual problem, not only in modern times, but also in the early centuries of the church. One of the contexts for mentioning the longer ending or its omission was in discussing the apparent discrepancy between the hour of the resurrection in Matt 28:1 and Mark 16:2, 9 (cf. Luke 24:1; John 20:1), based

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[6] Augustine likewise makes no mention of a secret or apocryphal book of Jeremiah, but a reference to "secrets" does creep in briefly as Augustine refers to the secret counsel of divine providence (secretiore consilio prouiedentiae dei) that led Matthew to write what is seemingly the incorrect name (*Cons.* 3.30; see CSEL 43:305).

mostly on a tradition originated or proliferated by Eusebius.[7] In his answers to questions on the Gospels by a certain Marinus, Eusebius relates that there are two ways to explain this apparent discrepancy (§55). First, he says, some would say that (1) because vv. 9-20 are not contained in most MSS, or the most accurate MSS, of Mark, and (2) they appear to contradict the other Gospels (i.e., the contradiction addressed in this question), they are spurious and can be disregarded entirely; if the verses are superfluous, then the question is as well.[8] Eusebius, however, is more hesitant to so quickly throw out any portion of a Gospel, so he proposes a second solution, that both Matthew and Mark are true and can be reconciled; to do so, he emphasizes the difference between them, that Matthew speaks of the hour of resurrection, while Mark indicates the hour of the first resurrection appearance. In his second answer to Marinus (reconciling Matthew and John; §56), Eusebius once more mentions in passing that some copies of Mark (κατά τινα τῶν ἀντιγράφων) include the reference to Mary Magdalene as the one from whom Jesus cast out seven demons (16:9).

Jerome later picks up this same discussion and paraphrases Eusebius in answering a similar question for Hedibia in *Epistle* 120 (§57). Jerome especially repeats the two answers posed by Eusebius; he summarizes concisely that the longer ending appears in few copies of the Gospel (in raris fertur euangeliis), and adds the clarification that the

[7] The evidence of the fathers is laid out in detail by W. R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 3-31. Cf. J. W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark* (Oxford: J. Parker, 1871), 38-69, who offers an interesting, although rather polemical (in favor of the authenticity of the longer ending), description of the history and problems of the patristic evidence. He also notes a passage by Theophylact, in addition to the fathers mentioned here, that is dependent on the discussion by Eusebius (p. 266). For a more recent rehashing of the same issues, see *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008).

[8] Eusebius refers to the MS evidence three times in this passage: the longer ending "does not appear in all the copies" (μὴ ἐν ἅπασιν αὐτὴν φέρεσθαι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις); whereas the text ending at Mark 16:8 is found in "the accurate copies" (ἀκριβῆ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) and "nearly all the copies" (σχεδὸν ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις).

passage is lacking in nearly all of the *Greek* MSS (omnibus Graeciae libris paene). He also quotes more of the longer ending, adding v. 10 to Eusebius's discussion (which focuses on v. 9). Jerome follows this question by paraphrasing Eusebius's second question and answer (on Matthew and John) as well; while he repeats a comment about scribal errors (related to Mary Magdalene), he does not include the passing remark about some copies including v. 9.[9] Although Jerome's answer is not independent testimony, it is valuable as a corroborating witness to a text from Eusebius that is known only from late MSS and quotations, and therefore helps to provide an early date for this text and its witness to the variant.

Eusebius's comments are once again echoed in two later and related works bearing their own set of complications. One passage appears in a text from a homily quoted in a number of places and attributed to different authors (Gregory of Nyssa, Hesychius of Jerusalem, and Severus of Antioch). The most likely attribution may be to Severus (§58), dating the homily to the 5th or 6th century. This version paraphrases Eusebius's answer differently than does Jerome, not mentioning the two-part answer but still mentioning the MS evidence. This witness states that the more accurate copies (ἐν . . . τοῖς ἀκριβεστέροις ἀντιγράφοις) of Mark end at 16:8, but some copies (ἐν . . . τισι) continue with v. 9. Eusebius's first part of the answer (the omission of these verses) is overlooked to explain instead how Matthew and Mark (16:9) can be read in harmony. Thus, the author has repeated Eusebius's MS evidence that allows the first of

[9] Even better evidence from Jerome, or more independent testimony, on the ending of Mark is his citation of the rare Freer logion at **Mark 16:14** (§60). The fact that he quotes from this shows an implicit acceptance of the longer ending.

his two solutions to be accepted, but by implication rejects that answer by including only the second option.

A catena that includes Victor of Antioch's *Commentary on Mark* (which is itself a catena, including unidentified quotations from authors like John Chrysostom and Eusebius) makes further use of Eusebius's answer (§59). In the commentary on Mark 16:8, Victor summarizes the information from Eusebius, in part similar to what is found in Severus, and then continues almost verbatim with what appears in Eusebius. Victor does not include the comment about the accurate copies but begins with the statement that some copies (ἔν τισι τῶν ἀντιγράφων) continue with v. 9, but that there is an apparent contradiction here with Matthew. While Severus expands on this contradiction, Victor jumps forward to the solution, which is found in both Eusebius and Severus—to read Mark 16:9 with an appropriate pause. Victor has been dated as early as the 5th century, but also later; between that and attribution problems for both his text and Severus's, it cannot be stated definitively which is dependent on the other, or if both are dependent on a third source, but there is clearly a similar excerpt being incorporated into different discussions of Mark.[10]

In the ensuing portion of Victor's commentary on Mark 16:9, Eusebius is again cited. The catena on Mark, which concludes with v. 9, ends with another summary of Eusebius's textual witness and a response to him. This states that even if (as Eusebius says) most copies of Mark (παρὰ πλείστοις ἀντιγράφοις) do not contain the longer ending so that some consider it spurious, "we" have found that most of the accurate copies of the Palestinian Gospel of Mark do include it (ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐξ ἀκριβῶν

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[10] For a comparison of Severus's text with Eusebius and Victor, in parallel columns, see Burgon, *Last Twelve Verses,* 267-68 (Appendix C).

ἀντιγράφων ὡς ἐν πλείστοις εὑρόντες αὐτὰ κατὰ τὸ παλαιστιναῖον εὐαγγέλιον μάρκου), and so it is included here. There is an obvious echo of Eusebius, not only in repeating his evidence (the "even if" clause), but also in the rebuttal (repeating "most" and drawing in the "accurate" copies that Eusebius mentions), in a sense using his own words against him (even the reference to Palestine may be an intended rebuttal to Eusebius, since he himself was from Palestine). Whether these words were added by Victor or a later hand, the MS evidence had apparently shifted in this place and time, and that external evidence is now used to outweigh the earlier evidence.

One thing that is clear from comparing the authors examined above is that they are all variations on the same basic tradition, seen most fully in Eusebius's answers to Marinus. On this point, it is worth quoting Burgon's summary (and his entertaining polemics):

> Six Fathers of the Church have been examined . . . and they have been easily reduced to *one*. Three of them, (Hesychius, Jerome, Victor,) prove to be echoes, not voices. The remaining two, (Gregory of Nyssa and Severus,) are neither voices nor echoes, but merely *names:* Gregory of Nyssa having really no more to do with this discussion than Philip of Macedon; and 'Severus' and 'Hesychius' representing one and the same individual. . . . Eusebius is the solitary witness who survives the order of exact inquiry.[11]

Before all of the later texts are dismissed, however, it is worth noting some details about Eusebius's text. First, there is evidence that the text as we have it today is an epitome or abridgement (perhaps compiled as early as the 4th or 5th cent., if this is the version that

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[11] Burgon, *Last Twelve Verses*, 65-66. As you can see, he prefers Hesychius over Severus as the author of the homily in question. Therefore, any of his assessments about Hesychius refer to the same text under discussion here referred to as Severus.

Jerome uses).[12] Thus, similarities between other texts that quote him (especially Severus and Victor) may not show dependence on one another but may be separate witnesses to a fuller version of Eusebius's text. While this does not make them independent witnesses for the ending of Mark, they may be independent witnesses to Eusebius's text, which is clearly an important witness in the conversation on Mark. Second, and not unrelated, is the possibility that Eusebius himself may have been citing or responding to an author prior to (or contemporary with) him—perhaps even Origen. The support for this is inherent contradictions between question 1 and question 2 in Eusebius's text, suggesting that he is offering opinions other than his own.[13] Combined with the first point, this leads to the intriguing possibility that later witnesses like Severus and Victor may help provide evidence for a tradition that is even earlier than Eusebius.

To return to the basic argument of Eusebius's text, certain things stand out: (1) Eusebius states that Mark ends at 16:8 in most of the copies, and in the accurate copies. This point is largely repeated in one way or another in the witnesses who paraphrase him, even if they disagree with the choice to do away with the following verses. (2) Eusebius is content to present two different options: either the verses may be omitted, or they may be explained. Even though the external evidence is heavily weighted against the inclusion of the verses, along with the internal evidence that the passage appears to contradict Matthew, these facts alone are not enough to reject the possibility of the second half of the two-part solution. While the ensuing explanation of

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[12] J. A. Kelhoffer, "The Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum* and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates concerning the Original Conclusion of Mark's Gospel," *ZNW* 92 (2001): 81-83.

[13] See B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, "Notes on Select Readings," in *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek* (1881; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 31-32; Farmer, *Last Twelve Verses*, 5-6; and Kelhoffer, "Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum*," 91-94.

the harmony between Matthew and Mark 16:9 mitigates the internal evidence, the MS evidence still stands. (3) Eusebius explains why the external evidence alone is not enough to excise the passage: he (or, in the more impersonal terms that he uses, "someone") is hesitant to dispose of anything contained in the Gospels since these verses have been accepted by the church. This same concern is illustrated in modern Bibles: passages that text critics may judge as secondary (such as the ending of Mark or the *pericope adulterae*) are still included in modern translations, even if set aside in brackets or footnotes.

Whether Eusebius's decision was based on respect for those who include the verses or simply fear of harsh reaction if anything is too obviously changed,[14] he recognizes the basic underlying fact that some Christians do accept these verses as Scripture, and therefore any answer to the question (of reconciling Matthew and Mark) must include Mark 16:9 in order to be satisfying and complete. The final comments in Victor's version add to this, showing that the issue of Mark's ending was not fully resolved when those comments were added (i.e., while it was valuable to quote Eusebius, it was also acceptable to disagree with him). These remarks also underline Eusebius's point, that if the verses are accepted by some within the church, it is preferable to include them and discuss them rather than to ignore them entirely. Therefore, in such cases the external evidence of the MSS is set aside in favor of the witness of church tradition, and perhaps church authority.

[14] The classic example of such a reaction is the congregation that was literally in an uproar over Jerome's change of a gourd to an ivy in his translation of Jonah (Augustine, *Ep*. 71.5; see Chap. 1, above).

8. Luke 22:43-44

The primary concern surrounding the inclusion or omission of these verses was whether they were added by heretics or excluded by misguided believers. The issue at stake was what implications the notion of Jesus sweating blood and being attended by an angel had for his humanity or divinity. This is the very concern that Hilary addressed (§74). In his discussion, he cites the verses as part of his lemma but then includes the caveat that there is no mention of this event in many Greek and Latin manuscripts (in graecis et in latinis codicibus conplurimis). Because of this absence, he expresses grave doubt about the veracity of the passage. However, he is acutely aware of how this text factors into the debate with the heretics, and so he finds it necessary to provide an exegesis of the verses regardless of their authenticity, lest they be misunderstood and abused. He argues, based on the greater context and orthodox teaching, that these verses do not show a weakness on the part of Jesus.

Epiphanius makes a similar point (§73), stressing that this passage shows Jesus's strength and humanity, not weakness. In a context where Epiphanius is listing examples of Jesus's true existence in the flesh, he turns to this passage from Luke, pointing out that Irenaeus likewise used these verses as evidence against the docetic heresy.[15] Epiphanius notes the external evidence, that the verses are present in the uncorrected (or unaltered) manuscripts (ἐν τοῖς ἀδιορθώτοις ἀντιγράφοις). The type of correction he has in mind here is a misguided one, since he asserts that the passage has been removed by the

[15] Ehrman points out other 2nd century examples of using this passage to argue against Docetism and even suggests that the variant emerged during that period for this very purpose (*Orthodox Corruption*, 193-94).

orthodox who mistakenly saw this text as somehow demeaning the Savior by portraying him as weak. Therefore, Epiphanius is arguing that the verses belong in the text and are lacking only in copies where they have been expunged, and that rather than claiming something heretical, they are most useful for apologetics against the heretics.

Conversely, Jerome (§75) does not assume these verses to be part of his text, although he begins by pointing out (in an opposite move from Hilary) that they are included in some Greek and Latin manuscripts (In quibusdam exemplaribus tam Graecis quam Latinis). Although Jerome makes no further point about the passage's authenticity, he finds it a useful support once more in argument against heresy, although the heresy in question is now different: Pelagianism rather than Docetism. But, as in previous apologetics, the main point is the same, that this passage shows Jesus's humanity and his dependence upon divine intervention. Thus, like Hilary, Jerome also notes the passage's secondary nature but does not see that as a deterrent for offering an exegesis and application of the text.

A few centuries later, the same verses were still in dispute, although by then the external evidence had accumulated.[16] Anastasius Abbot of Sinai (§72), then, uses this text as an example of a passage that cannot easily be expunged from the tradition because of the pervasiveness of the evidence. The context is a reference to the versions, and so his point is made based entirely on external evidence. He notes that the passage is present in many different languages and in the majority of the Greek copies (ἐν

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[16] An anonymous scholion from the 5th century or beyond also weighs in on the discussion, offering merely external evidence in the form of a list of patristic witnesses. The verses are presumed to be included in the text, so the scholion notes that they are lacking from some copies but that Dionysius the Areopagite, Gennadius of Constantinople, and Epiphanius of Cyprus all attest to the presence of the verses (cf. "Anonymous scholia" in Appendix A).

γὰρ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐθνικοῖς εὐαγγελίοις κεῖται καὶ ἑλληνικοῖς πλείστοις). His evaluation of the text's authenticity and history is very similar to that of Epiphanius: Anastasius determines that some have tried to remove the verses from the text, but have failed. While he does not raise the issue of orthodoxy or heresy, it is implicit in his argument.

9. John 1:28

Origen's discussion of John 1:28 (§80) immediately precedes (and provides the occasion for) his discussion of Matt 8:28 parr. (see above). The internal criteria appealed to in both instances is very similar, with Origen first recounting from his own knowledge the geography of the alternate locations, and then explaining the etymology of the names (here, he treats both locations, not just the preferred one). Thus, based on the location near the river and his explanation of the name, Origen prefers the reading "Bethabara." However, in this example, he also mentions the external evidence and decides against it, despite the fact that "nearly all the copies" (σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις), and even Heracleon, read "Bethany." Therefore, Origen shows that the MS evidence is negligible to him when compared with what he deems to be more objective and reliable criteria.

John Chrysostom (§78), like Origen, cites Bethany as the base text and then proceeds to explain the correct reading based on geography. Chrysostom does not comment on the majority of the copies but does say that the more accurate ones (τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἀκριβέστερον) contain the variant, "Bethabara." He then summarizes briefly the geographical argument, noting that Bethany is not beyond the Jordan nor in the wilderness. He offers no explanation of where Bethabara is located but implies that

this is the proper location. Epiphanius (§79) treats the variant even more briefly: in contrast to Origen and Chrysostom, he simply offers "Bethabara" as the base text and mentions in passing that other copies read "Bethany." Otherwise, he shows no preference or argument for either reading. Given the limited evidence for the variant "Bethabara" among the MS witnesses, it is interesting to postulate that both Chrysostom's brief comments and Epiphanius's lemma could be based on Origen's discussion.[17] If there is such influence, it is unacknowledged and therefore can only remain speculative. Whether Chrysostom is dependent upon Origen or not, the primary criterion expressed by both is an argument from geography.

10. John 7:53-8:11

The story of the woman caught in adultery is generally treated at authentic, or at least authoritative, by those authors who acknowledge the variant, though they feel it worth mentioning the questionable nature of the textual tradition. Didymus (§85), for example, paraphrases the story to further his exegesis of Ecclesiastes, emphasizing the danger of falling into hypocrisy. He simply mentions before launching into the story that it is present in some (copies of the) Gospels (ἔν τισιν εὐαγγελίοις), but he offers no evidence as to which Gospel(s) or at what location. Didymus does not comment on whether or not the pericope is authentic, but he treats it as authoritative Scripture by using it as a key part of his exegesis.

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[17] If there is direct borrowing from Origen's argument, this places Chrysostom's evaluation of the more accurate texts in the same light as Titus's comment on Matt 8:28 parr. (see above). In other words, what is the basis for judging those MSS to be more accurate? Is it simply their agreement with Origen's preference, based on internal criteria?

Jerome (§87) also makes only brief mention of the pericope's textual witnesses, but in much more detail. First, he specifies that the story is found in the Gospel of John (although he does not mention the exact location). Then, he notes it is found in many Greek as well as Latin copies (in multis et Graecis et Latinis codicibus). Very similarly to Didymus, Jerome proceeds from there to paraphrase the story and use it for his exegetical argument, offering no further opinion on the authenticity of the passage, although he treats it as authoritative. The context, however, differs greatly from that of Didymus, here instead concerned with countering the Pelagian heresy.

Not long after, Augustine (§84) appealed to the same passage in yet another context. In a discussion of marriage and adultery, Augustine shows concern that some misguided believers have deleted this pericope from their texts because they thought it would give their wives license to commit adultery. Unlike Jerome, Augustine does not refer to the external evidence, nor does he specify the Gospel in which the story is found. But, much like both Didymus and Jerome, he merely mentions the textual issue before launching into a more detailed paraphrase and exegesis of the text, his focus being on forgiveness and Jesus's ability to completely heal the sinner from subsequent relapse.

Much later on, in the 12th century, Euthymius Zigabenus (§86) found this pericope in his lemma but considered it worth noting both MS and early patristic evidence that the text should not be included. He states in his commentary (after John 7:52) that the accurate copies (παρὰ τοῖς ἀκριβέσιν ἀντιγράφοις) do not include the pericope, nor do they even retain it and obelize it to mark the secondary or dubious nature (not unlike the use of double brackets in modern critical editions). He cites as further evidence John Chrysostom, presumably referring to the omission of this pericope from

Chrysostom's *Homilies on John*. However, these comments merely preface Euthymius's ensuing commentary on John 7:53-8:11. So, while he recognizes that the passage may not be original, he finds it to be worthy of inclusion in his commentary, following the pattern of the fathers before him who trusted the authority of the pericope for a variety of exegetical contexts.

11. John 19:14

A number of fathers showed concern over the discrepancy between the hour of the crucifixion in Mark 15:25 and John 19:14, one reading the third hour and the other the sixth. Theophylact (§96) summarizes the debate over this in the centuries before him as boiling down to two main approaches; one of these was to attribute the discrepancy to a scribal error.[18] According to Epiphanius (see more below), this tradition stems back to Clement of Alexandria and can be traced down through Origen and Eusebius. While no such discussion by Clement or Origen is currently extant, there is a report of such comments by Eusebius.[19] In his address to Marinus, Eusebius (§94) assigned the reading "third hour" to Mark and "sixth hour" to John, and then explained that the difference was due to a scribal error relating to the characters representing the two numbers. The scribes used Greek numerals rather than spelling out "third" and "sixth," and because of their similarity in appearance and one careless stroke, a three (gamma) was misread as a six

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[18] The other approach Theophylact notes is to emphasize how the hours refer to different events in the Passion narrative, or to a different way of reckoning the time. Cf. Augustine, *Cons.* 3.13, who represents one example of the broader conversation on this topic beyond merely those writers who refer to a scribal error.

[19] Eusebius's text is preserved not directly from his own work but from a later excerpt that cites his testimony. The version of the tradition that Theophylact repeats is very similar to this citation of Eusebius, and at some points verbatim, but with a little more explanation (likely adapted for a later audience).

(episemon). Thus, Eusebius concludes that both Mark and John originally read "third" but an error caused the MSS of John to read "sixth."

This same explanation continued to be handed on through the centuries. As already mentioned, Epiphanius (§93) traced it back as far as Clement of Alexandria. Epiphanius himself also repeats the argument, giving an abbreviated version. He states clearly from the beginning that "third" is the accurate reading (τὴν ἀκριβῆ) of both Mark and John, but that in some copies (ἔν τισιν ἀντιγράφοις) of John, the character for three was changed to a six because of their similar appearance (he describes the same change as does Eusebius, but in different wording). It is next that Epiphanius states this error has already been corrected by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius, and therefore that eager students need not further amend the text. Although Epiphanius goes one step beyond Eusebius to mention the MS evidence, it is not clear whether Epiphanius has actually seen copies with each reading or is merely rewording the tradition (or repeating a form of it from Clement or Origen, now lost to us).

Jerome also repeats this tradition (§95), but in a context where he addresses a series of textual problems, or possible inaccuracies in the NT.[20] The common theme among the examples Jerome cites is that he puts implicit faith in the Gospel writers that their original copies were accurate in these details, and that he therefore attributes the inconsistencies to ignorant scribes (particularly in the earliest generations of the church). However, when Jerome repeats the tradition here, he does it slightly differently. Whereas

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[20] See n. 2, above, and Jerome on Matt 13:35 (§27) and 27:9 (§43). If indeed Jerome is merely translating (and editing) Origen's material in this homily, he may be directly witnessing Origen's version of the tradition, rather than receiving it filtered through Eusebius. Either way, it raises the question, since Jerome has a different take on it, whether he is faithfully transmitting Origen's comments or is perhaps even misunderstanding them. Since he adds the clarification that episemon is the *Greek* number sign, it is clear that Jerome had at least some part in shaping these comments.

Eusebius stated that all three Synoptics agree against John (because they say that darkness came over the land at the sixth hour, so Jesus must have been crucified before that time), Jerome states that Matthew and John both read "the sixth hour," while Mark reads "the third" (Jerome is apparently referring to Matt 27:45, when darkness begins to cover the land). Jerome thus determines that it was Mark that was edited, from the original "sixth" to "third" based on the misreading of a gamma for episemon. He therefore uses the same explanation to arrive at the opposite conclusion.

The same tradition was repeated throughout the centuries in various forms. From the catenae, an excerpt attributed to Ammonius (from 5th-6th cent. Egypt; §91) repeats the argument in an abbreviated form, but with an interesting emendation. He too states that John should read "third" but the gamma was misread by a scribe; however, he describes the character that it was mistaken for as the "gabex," which, he explains, is what the Alexandrians call the symbol for the number six. The *Chronicon Paschale* (§92) is another text that later repeats the same verdict, although without specifically reproducing the argument. Here, it is stated simply (without noting the alternate reading) that John reads "third hour" in the accurate copies and in John's autograph (τὰ ἀκριβῆ βιβλία . . . τε τὸ ἰδιόχειρον τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ ᾿Ιωάννου), the latter of which has reportedly been preserved and revered by the church in Ephesus. Nothing is mentioned here about a scribal error, but this version does repeat Epiphanius's comment that this is the most accurate reading.

In summary, then, a few points can be made. The first is that because the same argument was clearly passed on throughout the generations, it is unclear exactly where and when two different readings were known in John, or Mark—or indeed if they were

even known at all. It is possible that the entire argument is based on a conjectural emendation and is not based on MS evidence (although, not surprisingly, there does exist today MS evidence for variants in both Mark 15:25 and John 19:14). When Epiphanius refers to Clement, Origen, and Eusebius correcting the text (literally, making it accurate), the question is whether he is referring to their commentaries on the verse, or whether he knows a textual form or recension (containing this correction) that is attributed to Alexandrian and Caesarean scholarship. If Epiphanius's evidence is entirely based on Eusebius's testimony before him, then this raises a caution that just because a writer refers to what "some copies" contain does not mean he has necessarily seen such copies for himself.

A second point relates to the type of evidence attested, or the type of argument put forth. The general consensus here is that the variant is due to a scribal error. The explanation is valid, that one character may have been mistaken for another which is similar. In that sense, the argument is strictly textual, or external to the content of the text itself. Thus, when the MS evidence is mentioned, it is referred to in terms of what was "more accurate" or could be traced back to the evangelists themselves. However, behind this lies the implicit argument that gave rise to the issue in the first place: the internal evidence, the expected consistency within Scripture and historical accuracy of the evangelists, is what makes such conjecture about scribal error necessary. Whether as Eusebius and others argue, that the Synoptics agree in favor of the third hour against John, or as Jerome argues, that Matthew and John agree on the sixth hour against Mark, the expectation is that all four Gospels should—and originally did—agree on the hour in question, and that any variation is necessarily secondary to the original texts. This also

hints at what is seen more directly in some other examples, that sometimes the church fathers treat the individual Gospels as though they are multiple copies of the same writing; therefore, to them, a difference between Mark and John is a variant in the same sense as divergent readings in two separate copies of John.

Third, it is interesting to note the path that Epiphanius traces for the tradition, and what we have left for us today. It is not surprising that Origen receives partial credit for this explanation and correction of the text, nor that Eusebius would pass along Origen's textual scholarship. It is more curious, however, to see the initial credit given to Clement. As an Alexandrian scholar, Clement would certainly have good reason to be skilled in textual analysis, but in the limited writings of his that have come down to us, there are no examples of such interest in textual variants. If indeed Clement did originate this tradition, then that helps to date how early such variants may have been known, or how early it was seen as necessary to posit a scribal error to smooth out an apparent discrepancy among the Gospels. It would also be a concrete example of the type of training that Origen received from his Alexandrian predecessors that led to his rich contributions to textual discussions. Finally, Epiphanius's testimony that Eusebius was part of the chain of transmission, and his repetition of the argument, help to corroborate later citations of Eusebius's text, since we do not have the passage directly from Eusebius himself.

12. Romans 5:14

In his *Commentary on Romans*, as preserved in Rufinus's Latin translation (§106), Origen expounds at length on the phrase "in those who sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression" (in eos qui peccaverunt in similitudinem praevaricationis Adae).

Near the end of this conversation, he notes briefly that some copies (in nonnullis exemplaribus) have the negative, those who did *not* sin (qui non peccaverunt) in the likeness of Adam. Origen finds no contradiction in the negative, however, and proceeds to explain the meaning of the variant. Thus, while he notes the external evidence, he finds either reading acceptable as long as they do not change the meaning of the text. As with many of the variants mentioned in this commentary, it is always difficult to determine whether the reference was original to Origen or added by Rufinus, although the context and lack of mention of the Latin witnesses suggest that the comment was Origen's. However, it is also interesting that the other discussions of this verse come from Latin fathers.

For as moderate as Origen is in his evaluation of the variant, Ambrosiaster is vocally opposed to it (§103). As with Origen, Ambrosiaster's lemma lacks the negative, which he explains to be the Latin reading. In the Greek copies (in Graeco), however, there is a negative. While at first Ambrosiaster explains what this variant would mean and passes on with his exposition on the verse, he returns to the variant a little later with much harsher and more decisive words. He determines that the variant was added by someone who could not win an argument and therefore altered the text in order to have a proof text to call upon for the debate. In this criticism, Ambrosiaster especially displays his distrust of the Greek copies (or at least the contemporary ones). He does not find them more reliable, as "the original," like many of the Latin fathers. Here, he explains why: the Greeks have corruptions (due especially to heretics) within their own MS tradition, whereas some of the Latin translations were made from earlier, uncorrupted Greek texts.

Although his assessment in mostly negative, Ambrosiaster is more discerning here than many of his Latin contemporaries by acknowledging two things of which modern text critics are well aware: (1) the Greek MS tradition is not uniform, and not every Greek reading is superior to the versions simply for the fact that it is Greek; and (2) sometimes a Latin translation (particularly the Old Latin) may represent a Greek exemplar that is even earlier than the extant Greek evidence. In this sense, Ambrosiaster rejects a portion of the external evidence available to him, but he erects another authority in its place: the "patristic" witnesses. In particular, he names Tertullian, Victorinus, and Cyprian as corroborating the Latin MSS, and this bulk of external evidence he finds persuasive over the corrupted Greek texts. But Ambrosiaster does not depend entirely on external witnesses. He also explains his criteria for internal evidence: the correct reading is that supported by "reason, history, and authority" (et ratio et historia et auctoritas). Therefore, the reading must not only have the authority of respected teachers, but also consistency with reason (such as the logical meaning of the context) and what is known from history. He finds that these factors together support the reading which lacks the negative, in contrast to the Greek text.

Augustine twice mentions the same variant, but from the other side of the conversation. For him, the text he knew and used did contain the negative, and so this is the reading which he first explains. In his work *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins* (§104), Augustine exegetes this verse and then mentions that several Latin copies (plerosque latinos codices) read without the negative, but he determines that it has essentially the same meaning. But he implies his preference for the first reading because of its external support in nearly all of the Greek copies (graeci autem codices . . . aut

omnes aut paene omnes). He also adds here another comment, which is interesting in light of Ambrosiaster's strong sentiments—Augustine specifies that Greek is the language from which the Latin copies were translated. In *Epistle* 157 (§105), Augustine again addresses this variant. His approach here is very similar: he quotes and explicates the verse with the negative, then mentions that some copies (nonnulli . . . codices)—here he does not specify the Latin—lack the negative, but that the meaning of the verse remains the same. He concludes the discussion with a nearly identical statement, that most Greek copies (Graeci codices . . . plures), from which the Latin was translated, agree with his original quotation (including the negative).

Augustine, then, agrees in principle with Origen, although the two base their arguments on different variants. For both of them, the inclusion or omission of the negative does not change the essential meaning of the verse or its context, since the real emphasis is on the sin in the likeness of Adam. But Augustine goes one step further in his final verdict. Whether or not his comment about the Latin translated from the Greek had any direct relation to the type of argument put forth by Ambrosiaster, it is clear that Augustine had much more faith in the Greek MSS than did Ambrosiaster. That does not mean, however, that Augustine was unaware of variations within the Greek tradition. While he does not test the quality of the Greek MSS, he finds the bulk of them to agree with his lemma, and thus he expresses his preference based on external evidence. Ironically, Ambrosiaster seems to corroborate Augustine's judgment that the Greek MSS are fairly consistent in containing the reading with the negative, but his decision based on the same evidence is exactly the opposite.

13. Romans 12:11

While Ambrosiaster's lemma (§111) reads "serving the time" (tempori servientes), he is aware of a variant in the Greek texts (in Graeco) that reads "serving the Lord" (domino servientes). As seen in his comments on the variant at **Rom 5:14** (see above, §103), Ambrosiaster has limited faith in the Greek MS tradition. Here as well, he weighs the readings rather by the internal evidence, particularly the immediate context and the broader context of Romans. Ambrosiaster thus determines that the variant from the Greek does not fit the context since Paul has no need to command his audience to serve the Lord when he later makes it clear they are already doing so. As Ambrosiaster continues with his exegesis of the lemma, he also cites proofs from other verses in Paul, further expanding the context to establish the correct reading. He therefore relies on internal evidence (as he said at Rom 5:14, the reason or logic of the text), all but overlooking the external evidence, and if anything, using the label "Greek" dismissively rather than in favor of such a reading.

In his *Epistle* 27 (§112), Jerome makes it quite clear that he supports the opposite reading, finding the opposite value in the Greek evidence. In this letter, Jerome is defending his translation of Scripture against accusations that he has altered it, arguing that he has simply corrected the faulty Latin against the Greek original. He gives several examples of where he made such corrections, based on the Greek, the first of which is Rom 12:11. His mention of this variant is a single, derisive sentence, telling his opponents that they may read "serving the time," but he will read "serving the Lord." He then continues with similar references to other examples from the NT. Compared to Ambrosiaster, it stands out strikingly that not only is Jerome's conclusion the opposite,

but so is his approach. Whereas Ambrosiaster dwells on the context and all but overlooks the MS evidence, Jerome favors the Greek simply for being the original language and offers no reflection on the context. The difference in genre is key here (Jerome is writing a polemical letter, while Ambrosiaster is writing a commentary), and Jerome shows elsewhere that he is certainly aware of variations among the Greek MSS. But it is clear that Jerome gives priority to the Greek text over the derivative Latin.

The variant is also mentioned in Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, as translated by Rufinus (§113). While the lemma reads "serving the Lord," Rufinus has added (in agreement with Ambrosiaster and Jerome) that several Latin copies (in nonnullis Latinorum exemplaribus) read "serving the time." The comment about the Latin certainly belongs to Rufinus, but what is not certain is whether he augmented a reference to (Greek) MSS that already stood in Origen's text, or whether he added the entire reference. If Rufinus added the reference, then he must also have added the commentary, which states that this variant does not seem appropriate but then offers two other examples from Paul (one of which was used by Ambrosiaster for the same purpose [Eph 5:16]) on the same theme to explain what the variant could mean. Therefore, there is an implicit preference for the lemma (the same reading that Jerome prefers), but it is left open that the other reading could also be valid. Although the Latin copies are mentioned, there is no value judgment placed on Greek versus Latin, and the internal evidence (the broader context of Paul's letters) is used to weigh the possible validity of the variant but does not ultimately decide between the readings.

14. Romans 12:13

The situation at Rom 12:13 in Origen's *Commentary on Romans* (§114) is similar to that at **Rom 12:11** (see above, §113). In this case, however, it is even less clear how much of the commentary belongs to Origen and how much was inserted by Rufinus. The lemma for the verse reads "sharing in the needs of the saints" (usibus sanctorum communicantes); instead of continuing with a commentary on this reading (as at Rom 12:11), immediately it is noted that the Latin copies (in Latinis exemplaribus) have "sharing in the remembrances" (memoriis). The commentary that follows treats both variants as though equal, giving the reason that they both lead to edification. Here, therefore, while internal evidence is considered in order to show the meaning (and thus the validity, as a text that edifies) of both readings, a decision between the variants is suspended for the theological reason that both may have the same result for the audience.

Pelagius (§115) also uses the same lemma, although his translation for "needs" (χρείαις) is different (necessitatibus). And, like Origen or Rufinus, he also shows equal regard for either reading. Pelagius begins by explicating his lemma, then he notes that some copies (quidam codices) have the variant "remembrances." Without making any value judgment on this reading, he offers an explanation for it, then simply passes on to the next verse. While in other instances a commentator may argue that two different readings essentially have the same meaning, here both Rufinus (or Origen) and Pelagius offer two separate, yet equal, meanings for the two variants. What is esteemed, then, is not that the variants do not affect the meaning of the immediate context, but that neither essentially alters the meaning of Scripture as a whole.

Another interesting comparison between the variants here and in Rom 12:11 is that while both have very similar Western evidence to support the alternate reading, Rom 12:11 is discussed only in Latin writings (including the Latin translation of Origen's commentary), but for Rom 12:13 there is an excerpt attributed to Theodore of Mopsuestia (§116) among the Greek catenae, thereby attesting Greek, or Eastern, knowledge of the variant. Again, in this scholion the same lemma is presented, and then it is mentioned that some copies (ἔνια δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) read "remembrances." In contrast to the previous examples, the commentary here argues that both readings have the same meaning, and essentially conflates the two in the interpretation—to remember the saints is to consider their needs. But all three examples arrive at the same conclusion: both readings are equally valid, although "remembrances" is secondary, attested in other copies rather than in the preferred base text.

15. Romans 16:25-27

The doxology (currently) at the end of Romans has an interesting and complex history,[21] so it is no wonder that it achieved notice by the two most conscientious textual scholars, Origen and Jerome. The doxology had also apparently caught the attention of another "textual scholar," but in a different way. Thus, Origen (§120) begins his comments on these verses by addressing the "hack job" done by Marcion (or, more literally, his "dissection" of the text [dissecuit], as Rufinus translates). Origen notes that Marcion has removed the doxology and cut up everything from Rom 14:23 to the end of the book. Origen then describes the MS evidence for the doxology, aside from Marcion's

[21] For a summary, see B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 470-73.

edition. In some copies (in nonnullis . . . codicibus) the verses are found after 14:23, but other copies (alii . . . codices) include them at the end of the letter. Whether the final notation, "as it now stands," belongs to Origen or Rufinus, the commentary mentions and exegetes the doxology at the end of chapter 16, not at 14:23. The way that Marcion's evidence is described, it sounds as though his copy of Romans contained the doxology at 14:23, and so there may be an implicit rejection of that position due to its association with Marcion. Otherwise, the MS evidence for the two locations is presented as fairly equal (some . . . others). No explicit judgment is rendered, and it may only be the tradition of where the verses are located in the lemma that determines their position here.

Jerome's discussion (§119), on the other hand, is much more brief and appears in an entirely different context. In his *Commentary on Ephesians*, he is discussing Christian prophets and refers to this doxology as a text that some of them quote. He refers to it as appearing in "many copies" (in plerisque codicibus) of Romans. Unfortunately, he does not mention where in Romans the verses occur, since his point is not the verses themselves but the reference there to a "mystery." It is also worth noting that although this portion of Origen's *Commentary on Ephesians* is not extant, Jerome is throughout heavily dependent on Origen's commentary; in his comparison of the two texts, Ronald Heine asserts that "this entire section [of Jerome's commentary] must surely come from Origen" because "Origen has a similar discussion . . . in his exposition of Rom. 16:25 in his *Comm. in Rom.* 10.43."[22] Thus, this reference to the variant by Jerome may actually be traced back to Origen.

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[22] *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians* (trans. R. E. Heine; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 144 n. 6.

If this is the case, while we cannot compare the location of the doxology to the evidence in Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, the reference to "many copies" could be read in a couple of ways: either by joining the "some" and "others" for the two locations as a majority reading against Marcion's omission of the verses, or the MS evidence has now shifted from a neutral balance to a majority for one or the other. Or, of course, it could be Jerome's addition or interpretation, thus witnessing the Latin evidence (perhaps in conjunction with an addition by Rufinus, "as it now stands"). However, in both discussions, one thing remains clear: the discussion is entirely one of external evidence. While this evidence may not help to decide the position of the doxology, it does add up in overwhelming support against Marcion's omission of the verses, and any MSS that equally omit this passage.

16. 1 Corinthians 15:51

A number of variants are known for this verse, most revolving around some combination of positive and negative statements in the two halves of the verse. Among these possibilities, there were two major discussions by the fathers. The first weighed between the readings, "We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed," and the opposite, "We will all sleep, but we will not all be changed." Clearly, these variants were widely known and of concern to many fathers, since Jerome dedicates the majority of a letter (*Ep.* 119) to answering a question about this text. In this letter he cites the evidence of numerous writers. While Jerome quotes or refers to Theodore of Heraclea, Diodore of Tarsus, and Apollinaris, and makes passing references to Origen and Eusebius, there are only two fathers he quotes who explicitly discuss the variant: Didymus of Alexandria and Acacius of Caesarea.

Before quoting from Didymus's commentary on 1 Cor 15:51-52 (§130), Jerome notes that Didymus is passing along the opinion of Origen (from whom we have no extant discussion of this variant). The first part of Didymus's exposition is also preserved in a Greek catena, although Jerome's quotation includes further text. Didymus argues that the text means we will all sleep (die), but only the righteous, or the saints, will be changed. He notes the variant, "we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed," but rejects it on the basis of v. 52, which specifies that "*we* will all be changed." Rather than seeing this as a redundancy or reiteration in the text, Didymus understands it as pointing out who specifically will be changed since not everyone will be changed (the preferred reading in v. 51).

As quoted by Jerome, Acacius (§127) generally passes along the same argument—and since Jerome notes that Acacius was the successor of Eusebius, it is possible that the same textual discussion that Didymus received from Origen (either through his writing or through the school in Alexandria) may also have been passed down through Eusebius to Acacius. As Jerome himself notes, the discussion by Acacius is more extensive than that of Didymus. Acacius begins by pointing out that the majority of copies read, "We will all sleep, but we will not all be changed." But he adds that many MSS also read the opposite, and he explains how this is possible, because as 1 Thess 4:15-17 says that those who are still living will be caught up in the air with the resurrected, then therefore not everyone will have died. Acacius, however, prefers the first reading, based on the same argument as Didymus, that v. 52 explains only a limited

number, the saints, will truly be changed, and therefore v. 51 cannot refer to everyone being changed.[23]

Although Jerome quotes at length the opinions of others, he does not appear to argue for either variant himself (although his opinion may be implicit in the greater space that he gives to Didymus and Acacius). In closing his letter (§131), Jerome returns to the variants, only mentioning them in passing alongside one more reading, present only in Latin. The second of the two major conversations about variants for this verse (only noted but not commented upon by Jerome) was exclusively a Latin discussion based on this third variation which had crept into their translation: "We will all arise" (occurring only as a positive clause, and followed only by the negative clause). Rufinus (§133), referring to the variant in passing, cites "arise" as his lemma and "sleep" as the variant in other copies. His evidence includes remnants of the larger discussion; the variant he cites inverts the negative clause, so that his lemma reads, "We will all . . . , but we will not all," while his variant reads, "We will not all . . . , but we will all. . . ." Yet Rufinus finds nothing in the variant that contradicts his general argument, so he does not belabor the point or show any preference between readings in either matter.

For Augustine, the Latin "arise" was the majority reading. While he was aware that the Greek copies read "sleep" instead, his discussion is solely about these two options, not about the variation between positive and negative clauses; therefore, for him, the pattern "We will all . . . , but we will not all . . . " is an accepted fact. Since both readings reinforce Augustine's point when he uses the verse as a proof in his arguments

[23] An interpolation into the commentary by Pelagius, and once attributed to Jerome, seems to summarize this very argument, laying out both readings and then stating simply that the apostle's meaning here is with reference not to "all" but to the saints alone.

(that death is a necessary precursor to resurrection [*Ep.* 193; §128], and that the resurrection flesh will be changed [*Ep.* 205; §129]), he shows no preference between them.

17. Galatians 2:5

The fact that this variant, the omission of a negative particle, is discussed strictly by Latin fathers underlines that it is a Western reading. It is interesting, then, to note how the Latin fathers address the Greek evidence. Marius Victorinus's commentary (§139) is based on the text that lacks the negative: "for an hour we yielded" (ad horam cessimus). He immediately points out that some copies read (quidam haec sic legunt) the opposite, with the negative, but he determines that the majority of the MSS, both Latin and Greek (in plurimis codicibus et Latinis et Graecis), lack the negative. It is uncertain what or how many Greek texts Victorinus may have been referring to,[24] but clearly he felt that the external evidence favored the reading without the negative, and thus he determines this to be the preferred text. He then reinforces this verdict with internal evidence based on Acts and Paul's letters, particularly the circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:3) and Paul's willingness to adapt his behavior as circumstances dictated (cf. 1 Cor 7-8). Victorinus therefore has both external and internal evidence to support his reading of the text, which omits the negative particle.

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[24] J. B. Lightfoot evaluates this rather negatively, saying that in light of the MS and patristic evidence for the variants, "the statement of Victorinus, that it [the negative] was omitted 'in plurimis codicibus et Latinis et *Graecis*,' is not worthy of credit. He may indeed have found the omission in some Greek MS or other, but even this is doubtful. No stress can be laid on the casual statement of a writer so loose and so ignorant of Greek" (*Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* [rev. ed.; London: Macmillan, 1910], 122).

Ambrosiaster (§137) was likely aware of Victorinus's arguments, and perhaps somewhat dependent on them, in his own commentary.[25] Ambrosiaster's lemma also lacks the negative. More specifically than Victorinus, Ambrosiaster points out that the Greek copies have the opposite reading (Graeci e contra dicunt); he presents no further comments about the weight or preponderance of either the Greek or Latin evidence. The fact that this is the Greek reading, however, is not compelling enough for Ambrosiaster to prefer this variant. Further into his commentary, he returns to the variant and examines the internal evidence. While he does emphasize the circumcision of Timothy, as well as Paul's purification before entering the temple (Acts 21), stating that both the history and the epistles show that Paul did in fact "yield for an hour," Ambrosiaster spends the majority of the discussion examining the logic of Paul's argument. He determines that the mention of Paul taking action "on account of the false brothers" (Gal 2:4) makes the most sense if Paul then yielded to them for the sake of the gospel. Therefore, based primarily on internal evidence (both the logic of the text and historical information from other sources), Ambrosiaster prefers the reading without the negative, although in the end he rhetorically leaves the decision up to the reader.

Jerome (§138), however, takes a different approach. Although his base text contains the negative (and the pronoun "quibus," which is the fuller version of the variant[26]), he first notes the Latin version in his commentary (in codicibus legatur latinis). Later, he returns specifically to discuss the variant, opening by questioning how some

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[25] On the relationship between Marius Victorinus and Ambrosiaster, especially pertaining to this passage, see *Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (trans. Stephen Andrew Cooper; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 200-202.

[26] The majority of Greek texts (along with NA[27] and UBS[4]) read οἷς οὐδέ, reflected in Jerome's text; Marius Victorinus and Ambrosiaster lack both the pronoun and the negative particle.

people can read the text without the negative when clearly in the immediate case of Titus (v. 3), Paul did *not* yield. Jerome then determines there are two possibilities: to agree with the reading of the Greek manuscripts (graecos codices), which he finds to make the most sense in light of the second half of the verse, or to accept the Latin MSS (if any may be found reliable), but to understand the "yielding" not in relation to circumcision but to Paul's acquiescence to go to Jerusalem to address the issue. Thus, while Jerome clearly prefers the reading with the negative (implicitly deferring to the Greek MSS), he does allow the possibility of accepting the other reading as long as the meaning is the same. He therefore gives more weight to the external evidence, and particularly the Greek evidence, than does Ambrosiaster, but the internal evidence and the veracity of the text within the literary context and the narrative of Paul's life still provides the final verdict.[27]

18. Ephesians 5:14

Jerome (§153) provides one of the more colorful descriptions of a textual variant, and its implications, when he discusses Eph 5:14 in his commentary on this letter. He recounts the story of a sermon he once heard: the homilist presented a theatrical marvel (in theatrale miraculum), reading this verse not as "Christ will shine on you"

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[27] While Augustine does not address the variant, he does weigh in on the discussion of Gal 2:5, so he is worth mentioning here. Eric Plumer notes in his translation of Augustine's *Commentary on Galatians* that "neither here nor elsewhere in his writings does Augustine mention the variant reading of Gal. 2:5 in which the negative is omitted (*we yielded submission*)" (*Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes* [trans. E. Plumer; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003], 138 n. 33). But Augustine may represent the final step in the progression from Victorinus's and Ambrosiaster's preference for the Latin over the Greek to Jerome's reassertion of the Greek reading: Augustine "follows Jerome's text-critical analysis without so much as mentioning the positive reading—clearly recognizing the authority of the Greek tradition with the latter reports" (Cooper, *Marius Victorinus' Commentary*, 200-201). In other words, Augustine does not comment on the variant, not because he is unaware of it, but because he has accepted the Greek reading as the established text and sees no reason to give the Latin reading further credence. If this is the case, it is further evidence of the weight he gives to external evidence, especially with regard to the Greek as the "original" (see Chap. 3, above), but this argument can only (and therefore tentatively) be built upon his silence about the variant.

(ἐπιφαύσει), but "Christ will touch you" (ἐπιψαύσει). The homilist then interpreted this text as a prophecy about Adam, who would "awake" and "rise from the dead" when the blood of Christ dripping down from Calvary touched his skull (since Adam was reputed to be buried beneath Calvary—hence the name "the place of the skull"). Jerome is skeptical of this interpretation and leaves it to the reader's discretion, but he reports that the congregation that day gave a rousing response, clapping their hands and stomping their feet.[28] However, Jerome adds as a parting shot that this interpretation does not fit the sense of the context.

Besides the entertainment value of the anecdote, a number of interesting things can be seen here. First, note that Jerome does not mention any MS evidence, only what "we read" and what the homilist preached. By implication, the preacher likely had a text with this reading, but the illustration highlights an important truth about the history of the text. Scripture was heard more than it was seen, and even a skilled textual scholar like Jerome is receiving awareness of a different reading from what he has heard rather than actually seeing such a MS himself (at least, as far as he recounts here). It is an important reminder that in other cases as well, when fathers report on divergent readings, they may be basing that testimony on what they have heard preached, or taught, as much as what they have seen for themselves. Second, without any external evidence by which to evaluate the variant, Jerome instead turns to the internal evidence. Although he says, perhaps sarcastically, that he will let his reader decide on the true wording of the text, he

[28] While Jerome does not state where he was when he heard this sermon, the fact that the other three discussions that follow all come from Antiochene writers, and that Jerome had spent some time in Antioch (prior to the writing of this commentary), lead to the intriguing speculation that the sermon he heard was in that city. However, without further corroboration, this must remain no more than a speculation.

shows clearly where his opinion lies, based on the context of the verse. Therefore, if the reader does decide in favor of the preacher's variant, it will be a decision that goes against the internal evidence.

The other discussions of this variant are far less entertaining, but they do support Jerome's decision and add important evidence to the variants for this verse. John Chrysostom (§152) touches on this variant ever so briefly in a homily on Ephesians. He states simply that some read, "You will touch Christ" (ἐπιψαύσεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ), while others read, "Christ will shine on you," and he determines the second reading is the correct one. He does not, however, elaborate on his reasons for this decision. There is in Chrysostom's testimony one significant difference from Jerome's: while the verb for the variant is the same, the wording has changed slightly, so that the subject (Christ) is now the object. This is the variant attested in both UBS^4 and NA^{27}—neither includes the version of the variant given by Jerome. But further patristic witnesses corroborate Jerome's wording.

Theodore of Mopsuestia, in the Latin translation of his commentary (§154), attests the same two readings as Jerome. His lemma reads, "Christ will shine on you," but he immediately notes a variant in other copies (alii), "Christ will touch you." Like Jerome, Theodore finds that the latter reading does not fit the immediate context. He expounds on this further, noting the similar train of thought from light and darkness in the preceding verses to the image of Christ shining down like a light of knowledge and grace. Thus, he also relies upon the internal evidence. While he does not explicitly mention MSS, or how many or of what quality, a reference to either texts or commentators is implied in "others" (alii). Theodoret (§155), on the other hand, does specify MSS. His

lemma, however, is the opposite. He first quotes the text as "Christ will touch you" (again agreeing with the wording of Jerome and Theodore), then says that some copies (ἔνια δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) have the variant. Although his phrasing is more subtle, he too seems to prefer the reading "shine" since he explains that this is better suited to the context, that of light. Thus, while his lemma is different (closer to Chrysostom, who presented the rejected reading first of the two), he comes to the same conclusion as the other commentators, and based on the same internal evidence.

In comparison with modern critical editions, perhaps the most important insight the patristic writers can offer here is the witness that three of them provide to a variant not listed in the modern apparatus. This third reading (ἐπιψαύσει σου ὁ Χριστός) is valuable as an intermediate step between the other two readings, which helps to explain how the variant that Chrysostom attests may have arisen. The change between ἐπιφαύσει σοι ὁ Χριστός and ἐπιψαύσει σου ὁ Χριστός requires only the misreading of a ψ for a φ and then the consequent change of the case (and thus iota to upsilon) based on the verb. This latter reading, especially as it appeared in the MSS without word breaks (ЄΠΙΨΑΥCЄΙCΟΥΟΧ̅C̅), could more easily be mistaken for ἐπιψαύσεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ (reading the sigma of σου as the ending of the verb, the mind supplying a tau to complete the consequent ου). Regardless of how each variant arose, the testimony of three fathers to the same variant is not insignificant and suggests a variant that may have been otherwise lost from the MS tradition.[29]

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[29] It is possible that Theodoret is basing his testimony strictly on Theodore's commentary, since the logic of his argument is very similar to Theodore's at this point. If that is the case, however, it stands out that Theodoret does not also attest the same lemma (providing that Theodore's lemma has not been changed in the Latin translation, but then the discussion of the variant would also had to have been added or amended to fit the new lemma). If Theodoret is dependent on Theodore, then they represent only one witness to the reading, not two.

19. Hebrews 2:9

The variant at Heb 2:9, between χωρὶς θεοῦ and χάριτι θεοῦ, is an interesting example of a variant that is still debated in modern scholarship. This is due in great part to the testimony of the fathers.[30] The earliest discussion of the two readings is from Origen (§177). While he begins with the reading χωρὶς θεου, explaining how Christ died for all "apart from God" (or except for God), i.e. for all heavenly beings as well as all humans, Origen also notes the variant reading and shows how it essentially has the same meaning (that if God is the one giving the grace, then he cannot be the one receiving it, therefore he is still exempted). For Origen, then, either variant is acceptable, although he leans toward the meaning of his first reading, "apart from God." Origen reinforces this when he briefly mentions the variant again later in the same work (§178). This time, he cites "by the grace of God" first, then notes the alternate reading, although his final emphasis is on the phrase "on behalf of all" (ὑπὲρ παντός), and especially "apart from God, on behalf of all."

Jerome (§175) takes a similar approach to the text, although applying it in a different way. He cites "by the grace of God" (gratia Dei) first, then notes only in passing that some manuscripts have "apart from God" (ut in quibusdam exemplaribus legitur, absque Deo). Like Origen, though, Jerome appears to find the same meaning in the text regardless of the reading. His focus is not on the variant but on the next phrase,

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[30] For example, even though NA[27] and UBS[4] include χάριτι in the text (UBS[4] rates the certainty of this decision as an "A"), text critics such as Ehrman (*Orthodox Corruption*, 146-50) and J. K. Elliott ("When Jesus Was Apart from God: An Examination of Hebrews 2[9]," *ExpTim* 83 [1972]: 339-41) argue that χωρίς is the original reading. This argument is partly one of how the MSS should be weighed versus the patristic evidence. While χωρίς clearly has very limited MS support (0243, 424[c], 1739*), there is ample evidence from the fathers (besides those noted here, χωρίς is also attested by Ambrose, Fulgentius, Theodoret[1/2], and Vigilius) and the versions to suggest that it was a widespread reading in the early centuries. At the very least, it is clear that the two readings were in circulation by the 3[rd] cent., or even the 2[nd].

“on behalf of all” (pro omnibus). Jerome interprets the “all” in this context to refer to the patriarchs, all those who came before the advent of Christ. Since only humans are in view here, it is not necessary for him to emphasize the same exception as Origen did, that God is not included in the “all.” He therefore simply quotes the verse as evidence of his point and moves on with the argument.

However, other authors found more significance in the variant, causing it to become embroiled in Christological controversy. This could perhaps be traced back first to Diodore of Tarsus, although due to how he was later received rather than his own comments on the verse. In his commentary on Psalm 8 (§174), a chapter that is quoted and paraphrased in Hebrews 2, Diodore mentions this application of the psalm to Christ and quotes Heb 2:9. Diodore’s lemma reads χωρὶς θεοῦ, but he quickly notes that some copies have the alternate reading. Based on the context, Diodore determines as well that either reading is acceptable and that both essentially have the same meaning (although described in more circular logic, his argument is apparently similar to that of Origen, that if God is giving the grace, he is then exempted from receiving it). But Diodore does imply a preference between the readings, based on not only the meaning of the context but the style as well (ἵνα μὴ τὸ μέτρον ἀδικήσωμεν). While not essential to his own interpretation of the variant, Diodore does make one interesting comment that could become significant to those reading from the perspective of later Christological conversations: in discussing the meaning of the two readings, he does not refer to *Jesus* tasting death, as the verse does, but to “the flesh” tasting death (Εἴτε γὰρ *χάριτι θεοῦ* ἡ σὰρξ ἐγεύσατο θανάτου, δῆλον ὅτι *χωρὶς θεοῦ* ἐγεύσατο θανάτου. . .).

What is subtle in Diodore's treatment of the verse then becomes much more blatant in the exposition by his student Theodore of Mopsuestia (§179). First, Theodore is in no way ambiguous about which reading he prefers. He finds it absurd that some would change the reading to "by the grace of God." Second, it is clear in this statement that Theodore sees the variant as an intentional change based on a failure to understand the author's meaning. He too weighs the readings based on the context, although since he takes Paul to be the author of Hebrews, Theodore expands that context to the Pauline corpus. He thus gives examples of how Paul uses the phrase "by the grace of God" in other letters in order to show that the context in Hebrews does not have the same meaning, and therefore it would be completely out of place for Paul to use such a phrase here.[31] After shooting down the variant, Theodore then explains why his preferred reading ("apart from God") is appropriate to the context, and he does so in much deeper Christological terms than other discussions of the two variants. He understands the reference to God in this phrase to apply to Christ's divinity, so that the discussion then becomes one of Christ's nature and to what extent his divinity was involved when he was suffering. Such a conversation was becoming very important, and controversial, in Theodore's lifetime and beyond.

A text preserved in later catenae (attributed to Oecumenius [§176] and subsequently paraphrased by Theophylact [§180]) shows the aftermath of Theodore's comments. After their deaths, both Diodore and Theodore were condemned as Nestorian heretics (since Theodore was the teacher of Nestorius), and Theodore's use of Heb 2:9

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[31] Once it is acknowledged that Paul is not the author of Hebrews, Theodore's argument becomes moot. However, it is still valuable to notice his practice of broadening the context of a verse to incorporate the larger body of work by that author.

was one piece of evidence cited against him.[32] This is perhaps one reason why the MS evidence has come to lean so overwhelmingly against the reading preferred by Theodore. While he accused "by the grace of God" as being an intentional change made through ignorance, later the reverse was charged, that the Nestorians corrupted the text to read "apart from God" in order to support their theology that Christ's divinity was not joined with his humanity when he suffered and died on the cross. Interestingly, this exposition from the catenae returns to Origen's argument to explain what an orthodox reading of "apart from God" could be: Christ died for all other beings, including the heavenly ones (Eph 2:14 and 1 Cor 15:27 are then cited in support of this interpretation, perhaps in direct rebuttal to Theodore's use of Eph 2:8-9 and 1 Cor 15:10 against the reading "by the grace of God"). Although "by the grace of God" is clearly the preferred reading, this commentator still allows that the variant may be valid, if interpreted correctly.

In these treatments of the readings in Heb 2:9, a couple of things should be noted. First, the discussion is entirely based on internal evidence (comparison with the immediate context, the larger context of Paul's letters, and the rule of faith); even those who do acknowledge the MS evidence do not weigh or evaluate it in any way (Origen, Jerome, and Diodore all refer vaguely to "some copies"). This leads to a second point: it is possible that some of the later authors who discuss the variant are not attesting actual readings in MSS of their day but are simply repeating knowledge of the variant from earlier authors, especially once the reading became part of the heretical literature that needed to be refuted. It is also interesting that both readings were asserted to be intentional changes (whether out of ignorance or heresy). Yet Theodore alone is adamant

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[32] Cf. S. P. Brock, "Hebrews 2:9B in Syriac Tradition," *NovT* 27 (1983): 238 n. 7.

that only one of the readings can be correct; the other commentators are content to allow for either possibility.

CHAPTER 5

THE PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF TEXTUAL ANALYSIS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Because this study is based on explicit references to variants, it is limited in the conclusions that may be drawn based on this material. These references to variants all occur within literary contexts, so it is necessary to narrow the focus here to what can be determined from the application of textual analysis within such contexts. Textual analysis, as laid out in Chapter 1, also includes the creation of editions or recensions of a text; that issue, as it pertains to the NT, will be addressed in Chapter 6. The present chapter, however, will investigate the genres and literary contexts of the various discussions of variants, what criteria are applied to the variants, and ultimately what results are attained from those criteria.

1. Purpose of Textual Analysis in Literary Contexts

One important question to ask about how the fathers were examining and discussing the NT text is, for what purpose were they discussing variants? Part of the answer to this lies with the context of the works in which they engaged in such discussions. For example, mentioning a variant within an apologetic work might have an entirely different purpose or function than in a homily. It is necessary, then, to consider

the range of genres in which variants are discussed, any trends or differences within those genres, and the predominant contexts in which these discussions occur.

1.1. Apologetic Contexts

A handful of the references to NT variants occur in apologetic writings or contexts, where the church fathers are defending the faith against objections by non-Christians. One point that many of these references have in common is that the writer is attempting to explain apparent contradictions in Scripture, often those that have been raised directly by the opponents (showing a knowledge of the various Gospels or even variant readings by non-Christians). Two mentions of variants occur in Macarius Magnes's *Apokritika*, in which he is quoting and refuting a pagan philosopher, either Porphyry or one of his followers. In one instance, the philosopher himself cites a variant (although alongside Synoptic parallels, so that he does not distinguish this separately as a textual variant within one Gospel; see **Mark 15:34** [§53]). In the other case, Macarius cites the variant in **John 12:31** (§89) in his response, although knowledge of the variant may be implied in the vocabulary used by the philosopher (so that Macarius is simply clarifying that the other reading comes from some copies of the Gospel). While in the first situation, Macarius is in a position where he must address the apparent contradiction that involves a variant, in the latter case he is free to use the vocabulary from both readings, as did the philosopher, since the reading itself is not in question.

Jerome also addresses the accusations of Porphyry regarding textual matters and apparent contradictions in works that are not specifically apologetic. One occasion is in a homily (on Psalm 77 LXX), where the incorrect attribution of a quotation from this psalm

in some copies of **Matt 13:35** (§27) prompts Jerome to bring up Porphyry's attack based on this inconsistency, along with two other similar examples (**Matt 27:9** [§43]; **John 19:14** [§95]).[1] Eusebius explains the same situation in his *Demonstration of the Gospel*, dealing with the citation of the wrong prophet in some copies of **Matt 27:9** (§42), along with a variant form of the quotation from Zechariah.

Another example is in Origen's apologetic work *Against Celsus*. He is addressing the assertion of Celsus that Jesus was affiliated with tax collectors and sailors. Origen explains that while Levi is a tax collector, he is only referred to as an apostle in some copies of **Mark 3:18** (§50). Thus, Origen makes a concession that Celsus's point may be valid depending on which MSS are referenced. Altogether, in these examples there is generally a need for the father to defend the integrity of either Scripture (the Gospels) or Jesus. Sometimes that means explaining away a variant, at other times acknowledging the possible validity of a variant, or simply using the alternate reading to help explain the passage.

1.2. Exegetical Contexts

Understandably, the majority of references to variants appear in some type of exegetical context. These are subdivided here as commentaries, homilies or sermons, treatises, and letters. The treatises in particular are something of a miscellaneous category, not always as clear to distinguish from the polemical works treated below (since many of both deal with discussions of heresy and especially Christology). The

[1] The other occasion where Jerome answers Porphyry is in *Against the Pelagians*; Porphyry's attack here is against the character of Jesus, and Jerome adduces the story of the woman caught in adultery (**John 7:53-8:11** [§87]), noting that it is found in many Greek and Latin copies.

letters, while not strictly an exegetical genre, do contain many writings that are primarily exegetical in nature (especially when replying to an exegetical question).

1.2.1. Commentaries

By far, the majority of references to NT variant readings appear in the scriptural commentaries. This is by no means surprising; in fact, this is the first place one should expect to find such discussions. But the way variants are dealt with does not necessarily fit a set pattern. Some of the longest extant commentaries that include references to variants, and thus provide a good basis for comparison, are Origen's and Jerome's commentaries on Matthew, Origen's commentaries on John and Romans, Jerome's commentary on Galatians, and Ambrosiaster's commentary on the Pauline epistles.[2] Two common locations to find a variant mentioned are either immediately after the lemma is given or repeated,[3] or at the end of the comments for that verse.[4] At times the variant is

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[2] Cf. Origen's and Jerome's commentaries on Ephesians; Origen's text is only fragmentary, but R. E. Heine has managed an extensive reconstruction, presented in parallel with Jerome's commentary (*The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians* [trans. R. E. Heine; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Note also that Origen's commentaries on Matthew and Romans are extant primarily in Latin translation, but with some Greek fragments. There may be other patristic NT commentaries that one would expect to find in this list or in the Catalogue and are therefore notable for their absence.

[3] "Repeated" refers to when a commentary follows the pattern of quoting several verses together at the beginning of a section and then repeating each verse or phrase before its exegesis. For examples of variants noted immediately after the lemma, see §8 on **Matt 5:22** (Jerome); §18 on **Matt 6:25** (Jerome); §25 on **Matt 11:23** (Jerome); §39 on **Matt 24:36** (Jerome); §111 on **Rom 12:11** (Ambrosiaster); see also §114 on **Rom 12:13** (Rufinus); §139 on **Gal 2:5** (Marius Victorinus); §154 on **Eph 5:14** (Theodore of Mopsuestia); §155 on **Eph 5:14** (Theodoret); §173 on **Titus 3:15** (Jerome).

[4] For example, §24 on **Matt 11:19** (Jerome); §107 on **Rom 7:6** (Origen or Rufinus); §124 on **1 Cor 13:3** (Jerome, *Comm. Gal.*); §140 on **Gal 3:1** (Jerome); §142 on **Gal 5:19-21** (Jerome).

simply mentioned in passing as the reading in "some" or "other" copies, without further comment.[5]

The variant may occasionally be cited further into the commentary as simply "this reading or that reading" when repeating the passage. For example, Origen states that in **Matt 18:1** (§31), some copies read "in that hour," while others read "in that day." As he refers to the same phrase twice in his continuing commentary, he says first "'in that hour' or 'day'" and then "'in that day' or 'hour'" without ever choosing between the two readings.[6] As an extension of this, often the commentator offers an exegesis for each of the readings, regardless of the external evidence or the commentator's opinion on which is the better reading. Origen exemplifies this when he concludes his comments on **Heb 2:9** (§177), giving an interpretation for each reading as he quotes it, to show that each points to the same understanding of the verse: "whether 'apart from God he tasted death for all,' he died not only for humans but also for the rest of the spiritual beings, or 'by the grace of God he tasted death for all,' he died for all apart from God. . . ."[7]

The variant may also be discussed in detail, especially to clarify a textual problem[8] or a contentious theological matter.[9] The issue of apparent discrepancies in the Gospels that had to be explained (and were usually blamed on scribal errors) was a hot

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[5] For example, §18 on **Matt 6:25** (Jerome); §30 on **Matt 16:20** (Origen); §67 on **Luke 9:48** (Origen, *Comm. Matt.*); §99 on **Acts 15:29** (Jerome, *Comm. Gal.*); §175 on **Heb 2:9** (Jerome, *Comm. Gal.*); see also §117 on **Rom 16:3** (Theodoret).

[6] For further examples, see §37 on **Matt 24:19** (Origen); §178 on **Heb 2:9** (Origen, *Comm. Jo.*); see also §90 on **John 16:13** (Augustine).

[7] ACCS 10:39-40. For additional examples, see §110 on **Rom 8:22** (Origen or Rufinus); §136 on **2 Cor 5:3** (Ambrosiaster). This same practice is manifest to varying degrees throughout the commentaries and other literature.

[8] Along with further examples listed in this paragraph, see §120 on **Rom 16:25-27** (Origen).

[9] Cf. §39 on **Matt 24:36** (Jerome).

topic. Two verses in particular were discussed both in the commentaries and in other literature: **Matt 13:35** (§28, Jerome) and **Matt 27:9** (§44, Jerome; §45, Origen); both of these are OT quotations for which some variants give the wrong name for the source of the quote. Also, the mention of one variant may occasion discussion of similar variants or textual issues (such as Origen's commentary on Bethany versus Bethabara in **John 1:28** [§80], which led him to elaborate on the Gerasenes and alternate names in **Matt 8:28 parr.** [§21] as well as some OT issues). Origen in particular also uses the commentaries to speculate on or conjecture possible original readings where there is no extant textual variant (either in his day or in ours), generally due to his expectation of harmony among Gospel accounts or his distrust in the copyists.[10]

References to NT variants appear in OT commentaries as well. Often this occurs when the OT passage in question is quoted in the NT. These are occasions for comparison between the OT and NT versions of the verse, sometimes highlighting a divergent reading,[11] or (as in the NT commentaries) when some copies of the NT text cite the wrong source for the quotation.[12] But NT variants are also noted in OT commentaries simply when the father is citing the NT passage in support of a particular argument. Didymus especially does this (for both OT and NT variants; see Chap. 1). In his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, Didymus cites the story of the woman caught in adultery (as found in "some [copies of the] Gospels" [ἔν τισιν εὐαγγελίοις]) to support an

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[10] See §14 on **Matt 5:45**; §32 on **Matt 19:19**; §40 on **Matt 26:63**; §102 on **Rom 4:3**; §147 on **Eph 2:4**; cf. Pelagius, §122 on **1 Cor 10:22** (all in Additional Texts).

[11] See §§34, 35 on **Matt 21:9, 15** (Origen).

[12] See the examples for Matt 13:35; 27:9 in the previous paragraph. For OT commentaries, see §26 on **Matt 13:35** (Eusebius). On comparison of the OT and NT quotations in general, see §174 on **Heb 2:9** (Diodore).

argument that even an offended party is not without guilt (§85 on **John 7:53-8:11**). In his *Commentary on Psalms*, Didymus similarly uses **Titus 3:10** (§172) to illustrate when one should, like the psalmist, be silent and not open one's mouth; along with the quotation from Titus, he briefly notes a variant in the verse.

In addition, it is valuable to show by contrast what is not found in most NT commentaries from the early centuries. One example for comparison, representing what is found in some OT commentaries, is Theodoret's *Commentary on Psalms*. Throughout this commentary, Theodoret repeatedly refers to the differing versions of Symmachus, Aquila, and Theodotion, often presenting one of these varying translations immediately after he quotes the lemma. A second example, from a later NT commentary, is Bede's work on the Acts of the Apostles, both his commentary and his later retractions (see Appendix B). The MS of Acts that Bede worked from was a Greek-Latin diglot, so he regularly refers either to the Greek reading behind the Latin translation, or to a variant in one or the other, or between both. These two examples reflect how a commentary truly interested in textual analysis would look. Even the commentaries by Origen and Jerome on Matthew, or Origen's commentary on Romans as translated and edited by Rufinus, for their relative abundance of references to variants, do not comment on variants nearly as systematically or as frequently as these two examples from Theodoret and Bede.

The purpose of the early NT commentaries was not to establish the best text for the reader but to focus on the interpretation of the text. The references to variants were therefore not systematic but occasional, whenever the commentator deemed them to have some significance. Sometimes the variants affected the text's interpretation, and sometimes they did not. It does beg the question, why bother mentioning variants at all

when they are considered to have no impact on the meaning of the text? The answer: for the simple pastoral reason that the audience might be aware of the different readings, and it was necessary to explain to them the meaning of the text with which they were most familiar. One situation where this reason becomes readily apparent is in Rufinus's translations of Origen. When Origen's commentary was based on one reading, and Rufinus's Latin readers were familiar with a different variant, Rufinus had to note the difference simply to explain why Origen is commenting on a different text than their own Bibles. The point in mentioning the variant is not necessarily to emphasize which is the better reading, but to help the audience understand the interpretation.

1.2.2. Homilies

In comparison with the commentaries, the discussions of variants in homilies are much more sparse, but what is perhaps more noteworthy is that variants are mentioned at all in this context.[13] The clearest examples come from John Chrysostom. In fact, both of his references to NT variants are contained in his homilies. In each case, the reference is brief, and he states decisively which is the better reading. For **John 1:28** (§78), Chrysostom does include enough explanation to show the reason for his decision (the geography of where Bethany is located), but for **Eph 5:14** (§152) he offers nothing more than the variant and his verdict. He thus seems to be guiding his audience toward the

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[13] It is possible, however, that references to variants were not part of the original homily but a later addition, either by the homilist or by a transcriptionist—or a translator. Three examples of this are in the Latin translations of Origen's homilies: the variant discussed in his *Homilies on Luke* (**Luke 1:46** [§62]) appears to be inserted by Jerome, and the variants in his *Homilies on Numbers* (**2 Tim 4:6** [§170], in Additional Texts) and *Homilies on Joshua* (**Col 2:15** [§160]) seem to be added by Rufinus. A more ambiguous situation is the *Homilies on Psalms* attributed to Jerome, which may be his translation of Origen's homilies; however, the discussion of the variants in **Matt 13:35** (§27), **Matt 27:9** (§43), and **John 19:14** (§95) may well be inserted by Jerome (see the footnotes in the Catalogue for §27).

correct reading in situations where a variant may be widespread enough to cause confusion or misunderstanding. If the sermon described by Jerome based on the variant in Eph 5:14 (§153) was delivered in Antioch, this may be part of the reason that Chrysostom needs to clarify the proper reading for his audience (however, the variant he attests is slightly different from the variant used by Jerome's preacher).

1.2.3. Treatises and Theological Writings

As noted above, "treatises" is a rather broad category that has overlap or at least similarity with both the commentaries and the polemical works. In general, these are exegetical or theological compositions meant to explore particular issues rather than going verse by verse through Scripture or refuting a specific person or movement. One type of work included here in this category is writings on the harmony of the Gospels or apparent contradictions between them. For example, Eusebius answers questions by Marinus regarding problems at the end of the Gospels, prompting significant discussion of the ending of Mark (**Mark 16:9ff.** [§§55, 56]), as well as a supposed scribal error in **John 19:14** (§94) concerning the hour of the crucifixion. In Augustine's work on the *Harmony of the Gospels*, he frequently notes a variant in one of the Gospels when comparing the parallel accounts. While for **Matt 10:3** (§23) and **Mark 8:10** (§52) the variant appears simply to provide additional information alongside the Synoptic parallels (in both cases, Augustine determines that it is not problematic for a person or place to go by two different names), the variant in **Luke 3:22** (§65) seems to present yet another parallel reading that he must explain (he judges that the voice from heaven may have

spoken more than one statement at the baptism of Jesus, if this reading is found in reliable MSS).

Augustine's discussion of **Matt 27:9** (§41; also addressed by Eusebius in his apologetic defense of the Gospel [§42]), however, highlights what is really at stake in such works. Here, Augustine must defend the Gospel writer in the face of an apparent mistake, namely citing the wrong prophet for a Scripture quotation. Ultimately, the same type of concern underlies both Augustine's treatise and that by Eusebius: to defend the integrity of the Gospels in the light of potential problems or contradictions. The Gospels are expected to contain a harmonious record of the life of Jesus, and so their differences cannot be ignored. Although Eusebius is generally content to explain away such problems as the result of scribal errors, Augustine is not and must find other solutions.

Another type of treatise where variants are occasionally mentioned is in theological works on the Spirit or the Trinity. This was also related to Christological issues, and so some of these treatises were polemical as well, either in whole or in part, to counter heterodox teachings. In his treatise *On the Holy Spirit*, Ambrose discusses a handful of variants. Regarding the goodness of the Spirit, he quotes **Luke 11:13** (§68) and the parallel in Matt 7:11; he notes that some copies of Luke have the same reading as Matthew, which he treats not as a harmonization but as further corroboration of Matthew's reading. In the same work, Ambrose also refers twice to passages that he assumes the heretics (the Arians) have mutilated for their own purposes (**John 3:6** [§81]; **Phil 3:3** [§157]; see also Polemical Contexts, below). Augustine, in his work *On the Trinity*, also discusses the latter verse, using Phil 3:3 to argue for the divinity of the Spirit (§158). In noting the variant, he is conceding that according to those MSS, the verse no

longer supports his point. While he does not believe the variant to be the genuine reading, he is willing to move on and cite another Scripture to reinforce his argument. Hilary also has a work *On the Trinity*, where he must similarly address a variant in **Luke 22:43-44** (§74) that he does not accept as genuine but has to accede how it may be used to counter his point (here, focusing on the divinity of Jesus).

In other cases, the father quotes only one reading (not both) but feels the need to defend the use of that variant.[14] Thus, Ambrose (in *On the Incarnation*) cites **Gal 4:8** (§141) regarding the divine nature, but he justifies his quotation by emphasizing that the variant is found in the Greek copies, which have greater authority. Augustine, discussing adultery and the need for reconciliation after repentance, points to the example of the woman caught in (and forgiven of) adultery in **John 7:53-8:11** (§84), but he argues that some have removed this story from their Scriptures due to their lack of faith or proper understanding. Not all contexts for variants were in defense of a particular theology, but it is apparent from these various instances that the fathers were well aware of how variant readings could be used for or against a particular doctrine, whether they believed the text to be intentionally altered or not. But in other cases, they simply argued how diverse readings could support the same interpretation, as Augustine does for **Matt 5:32** (§11) and **Rom 5:14** (§104). The purpose of noting these variants seems to be to illustrate that regardless of the text one follows, the same meaning may be found.

[14] See also the examples from Jerome under Polemical Contexts, below.

1.2.4. Letters

A chief example of how exegetical discussions, particularly those handling textual matters, were conducted within personal correspondence is the series of letters between Augustine and Jerome on the textual basis for OT translations (see Chap. 1). Just as this complicated dialogue started with a question by Augustine, a number of discussions of the NT text were also prompted by a specific question to a father who had knowledge and expertise on the text. Jerome in particular addressed textual issues in his letters, discussing not only translation and variants, but also larger issues relating to MSS and copyists.[15] For example, in his letter to Laeta about rearing her daughter, Jerome advises that in selecting the best quality books, one should favor accuracy over appearance.[16] In a letter responding to Lucinius's desire for copies of Jerome's writings, Jerome explains that he has tried to oversee the accurate copying of his works ("I have repeatedly ordered them [the scribes] to correct them by a diligent comparison with the originals") but adds the disclaimer that any remaining mistakes should be attributed to the copyists rather than to Jerome himself.[17] Jerome was therefore concerned with the accurate copying of texts, whether that be his own works or the Scriptures, and he brought this to the attention of others through his correspondence.

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[15] Besides those mentioned here (*Ep.* 119, 120, 121), other letters of Jerome that include discussion of variants are *Ep.* 27 (**Rom 12:11** [§112]; **1 Tim 1:15** [§167]; **1 Tim 5:19** [§169]) and 127 (**Luke 14:27** [§70]). Other church fathers, also not included here, who discuss variants in their letters are Epiphanius in a letter to Eusebius, Marcellus, Bibianus, and Carpus (§93 on **John 19:14**) and Isidore in *Ep.* 1576 (§181 on **Heb 9:17**). Cf. the spurious letter by Athanasius (§6 on **Matt 5:22**).

[16] "Let her treasures be not gems or silks, but manuscripts of the holy Scriptures; and in these let her think less of gilding and Babylonian parchment and arabesque patterns, than of correctness and accurate punctuation" (Jerome, *Ep*. 107.12; cited in B. M. Metzger and B. D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* [4th ed.; New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005], 11 n. 7).

[17] Jerome, *Ep.* 71.5; NPNF 2.6:153; for further discussion of this text, see Chapter 6.

One of the most extensive discussions of a textual variant by Jerome is in *Ep.* 119, in answer to Minervius and Alexander, monks from Toulouse. Jerome spends the majority of the letter citing the opinions of various other fathers on this verse, **1 Cor 15:51** (some of whom discuss the variant, and some do not): Theodore of Heraclea, Diodore of Tarsus, Apollinaris, Didymus (and briefly Origen), and Acacius of Caesarea. He then addresses another exegetical question (not concerning a variant), and likewise appeals to the opinions of numerous fathers. While Jerome does give his own opinion on the variant, he expends more space on quoting from others than on explaining the logic himself. Something similar happens in Jerome's *Ep.* 120, addressing **Mark 16:9ff.** (§57), although here Jerome paraphrases the argument of Eusebius without crediting him directly. This is therefore an interesting case and raises the question of what inquiry Jerome may have actually received from Hedibia (perhaps the first two questions, preceding the text he borrowed from Eusebius, and then a question related to the ending of Mark which prompted him to paraphrase not only Eusebius's answers on the matter, but also some of the same questions), or if Jerome was using the genre of a letter for a particular purpose to transmit the answers that Eusebius had once provided for Marinus.[18]

Besides his correspondence with Jerome, Augustine also addresses textual matters in several of his letters. There are some points of overlap, both with Augustine's own works and with the letters of Jerome. For example, both Jerome (*Ep.* 121; §162) and

[18] In some ways, *Ep.* 120 and 121 fall into a category by themselves since both are comparatively longer than Jerome's other exegetical letters, and both include a preface similar to those attached to his commentaries. In fact, Jerome even referred to *Ep.* 120 (as an "opus") in his commentary on Isaiah (17.63) written shortly thereafter, suggesting that he put the letter into public circulation at the same time he sent the personal reply to Hedibia, and the same may be the case with *Ep.* 121. It seems at least that Jerome used the occasion of inquiries by these two women (Hedibia and Algasia) to provide more public answers to these common questions. For more on these two letters, see A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 180-93.

Augustine (*Ep.* 149; §161) address the larger context of Colossians 2 as well as the variant in **Col 2:18** in their letters (Jerome is answering questions by the lady Algasia, and Augustine is replying to Paulinus of Nola). Augustine notes the variant in **1 Cor 15:51** in two different letters, *Ep.* 193 (§128) to Mercator and *Ep.* 205 (§129) to Consentius, both addressing issues relating to resurrection. He does not repeat himself in the second letter, but in both contexts, while he feels the variant is worth mentioning, he ultimately indicates that it is of no consequence to the understanding of the passage or the point he is making.

Augustine also refers to the same variant from **Rom 5:14** both in his treatise on *Guilt and the Remission of Sins* (§104) and in *Ep.* 157 (§105) to a certain Hilary regarding Pelagianism. In this case, there is more similarity between the two discussions of the variants, although not a verbatim reproduction of the same argument. Again, though, while Augustine feels the variant is worth noting, his conclusion is that either reading may lead to the same understanding in the context of the point he is making (on original sin). There is not necessarily a clear distinction, then, between exegetical discussions offered in letters (typically prompted by questions from a specific person) and in treatises, other than the name of the addressee. But variants were typically a secondary matter, not the primary focus of the letter (the exception may be Jerome's *Ep.* 119, but even there, the ultimate focus is on the understanding of the passage, not on deciding between variants).

1.3. Polemical Contexts

The earliest extant discussion of a variant occurs in a polemical context, Irenaeus's writing *Against Heresies.* Here, Irenaeus argues decisively in favor of one reading (the number 666) in **Rev 13:18** (§190) since he believes it is essential to have a proper understanding of this passage. He does not attribute the variant to heretics, necessarily, but allows that it may have been an honest mistake by the scribes—although, he does warn there will be a harsher judgment for those who may have altered the text intentionally. Beyond Irenaeus, a number of subsequent discussions also occur in contexts where the church father is defending orthodoxy against potential distortions of theology, and especially corruptions of Scripture. Several references to variants appear in Epiphanius's two works against heresies, the *Panarion* and the *Ancoratus*. He is typically explicating Scripture in these references, and either emphasizes the correct reading or simply notes the variant in passing.[19] While the works themselves are countering heresy, in only one of these examples, the sole reference to a NT variant in the *Ancoratus*, does he actually counter heresy on the level of the individual variant. In this instance, Epiphanius states that the orthodox, rather than heretics, have removed **Luke 22:43-44** (§73) because they have misunderstood how it exhibits the humanity of Jesus. He does not dwell on the variant, but he uses it in support of his larger theological point, thus illustrating its proper interpretation.

[19] Other examples not discussed here are **Matt 1:11** (§1); **Matt 2:11** (§2); **Matt 8:28 parr.** (§20); **Luke 2:4//John 7:42** (§63); **John 1:28** (§79); **2 Tim 4:10** (§171); cf. **Eph 1:1** (§144). In many of these cases, Epiphanius notes the variant only briefly, sometimes emphasizing which variant is to be preferred, and sometimes not. The one case in which he spends more time discussing the variant and its cause is **Matt 1:11** (§1), which he does not attribute to heretics but to scribes.

Jerome also notes variants in some of his polemical works, although, like Epiphanius, he typically does not dwell on the variant itself. In Jerome's treatise *Against the Pelagians* in particular, Jerome's common format is to adduce one Scripture after another, often with little accompanying commentary, to support his argument.[20] In the midst of these chains of Scripture, he occasionally notes a variant for the verse he is quoting (e.g., §9 on **Matt 5:22**), or the MS evidence for a passage (such as the *pericope adulterae* [§87 on **John 7:53-8:11**], the longer ending of Mark [§60 on **Mark 16:14**], or the account of Jesus sweating blood [§75 on **Luke 22:43-44**]) if it does not appear in all copies.

In these latter three examples, Jerome appears simply to be justifying his use of the passage as scriptural testimony. In the former example (Matt 5:22), it is instructive to compare Jerome's reference to the variant here with his discussion of the same variant in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8). In the commentary, Jerome's focus is on the variant itself, and the Scriptures he cites are in defense of his preferred reading. In *Against the Pelagians*, the variant is not the focus of the discussion but one piece of evidence alongside the other scriptural testimony, so he does not spend time defending his preferred reading, only states what it is and moves on with the argument. In *Against Jovinian*, however, Jerome spends much more time discussing the variant in **1 Cor 9:5** (§121) because of the role it plays in his larger theological argument (that the apostles did not have wives [at least, after they left everything to follow Jesus], in defense of

[20] Ambrose does something similar in *Against Eunomius* where he refers to **Eph 1:1** (§143), although he spends more time discussing the meaning of the variant that Jerome typically does in these contexts.

celibacy). Again, the focus is not on the variant, but on how the reading Jerome cites factors into his theological point.

Beyond merely polemical works, the fathers also addressed heretical applications or distortions of Scripture in other contexts. Socrates, in his church history, criticizes the ignorance of Nestorius and says especially that he must not have known the reading in **1 John 4:3** (§184). While Socrates does not say explicitly that Nestorius or his followers corrupted the text, he does attribute the alteration more ambiguously to those who wished to separate the divine and human natures. In his *Commentary on Matthew*, Jerome first seems to determine, based on the evidence of Origen and Pierius, that the phrase "and the Son" does not belong in **Matt 24:36** (§39); however, because the phrase has been misused by heretics, particularly Arius and Eunomius, Jerome spends ample time explaining its meaning.

Ambrose likewise addresses the same variant from **Matt 24:36** (§38) in his polemical work *On Faith*, against the Arians. He suggests that those who have falsified the Scriptures have added this phrase. Despite his conclusion of its secondary nature, though, like Jerome he must also explain its meaning in the context to counter its use by the Arians. In *On the Holy Spirit*, Ambrose accuses the Arians even more directly of falsifying the Scriptures by removing a phrase in **John 3:6** (§81) that unequivocally states the divinity of the Spirit. Thus, while such discussions do not always occur within polemical works, at times the fathers cannot overlook the use of a particular passage by heretics, or the possibility that a variant is present (or omitted) because of the heretics. Even when the authors determine that the reading is a corruption, they still are forced to

offer an interpretation for it in order to counter the use that has been made of it by the heretics.

1.4. Summary

By examining the different genres and contexts within which variants are addressed, we get a better picture of how and why the church fathers applied textual analysis to bring to light or decide between variant readings in the NT text. In apologetic settings, they often had to defend a particular reading or explain away an apparent contradiction, while in polemical contexts, they at times went on the offensive, accusing heretics such as Arians of corrupting the text. On rare occasion, a variant was briefly noted in a homily, apparently to guide the audience toward the proper reading. But the majority of references to variants occur in commentaries or similar exegetical contexts (such as letters or theological treatises), where specific texts are under discussion. Even in these contexts, however, the mention of variants is occasional rather than systematic, and the emphasis remains on the meaning of the text rather than on the variant itself. Therefore, while it may be necessary to address a variant because it is in circulation and thus familiar to the audience, the primary purpose is not to establish a single accurate text, but to provide the most accurate interpretation of Scripture.

2. Criteria Used in Textual Analysis

For the sake of comparison with modern methods, the criteria are organized by the format provided by Metzger: (1) External Evidence; (2) Internal Evidence: (a) transcriptional probability (scribal tendencies, including unintentional and intentional

changes); (b) intrinsic probability (what the author would more likely have written).[21] It is important to note, however, that these are modern rather than ancient categories.[22] The closest that one of our writers comes to describing a distinction between external and internal evidence is Ambrosiaster's claim that someone has falsified the text (**Rom 5:14** [§103]) in order to appeal to textual authority, whereas the true reading is in accord with reason, history, and tradition. In such a division, the manuscript evidence stands on one side, and the logic and corroborations (historical, literary, geographical, as well as the testimony of reputable scholars) of the reading stand on the other. While this would generally fall along the divisions of modern textual criticism—manuscript (external) evidence versus context (internal evidence, specifically intrinsic probability)—one difference is that the evidence of previous fathers would be treated with the external evidence rather than the internal. Augustine also provides some distinctions for weighing the external evidence (see below). The question that remains, and will be examined here, is how systemically either he or other early Christian scholars applied such criteria to the NT text.

[21] Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 302-4. For the description of unintentional and intentional changes, see pp. 250-71 (for a slightly different enumeration, see J. H. Greenlee, *Introduction to the New Testament Textual Criticism* [rev. ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995], 55-61). These categories are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

[22] As noted in Chapter 1, E. G. Turner (*Greek Papyri: An Introduction* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1980], 110) lists a number of criteria used by Aristarchus and the classical Alexandrian scholars, both subjective (those readings not true to life, improbable, morally harmful, verbally contradictory, contrary to the art of poetry, or unbecoming) and objective (based on historical, geographical, and linguistic concerns), but these are still modern descriptions, not an ancient system of classification. This list best fits with the internal evidence under instrinsic probability and has several points of correspondence with references to NT variants by the church fathers.

2.1. External Evidence

When referring to variants, the church fathers often make note of the MS evidence, commonly using phrases such as “some copies have . . .” But at times, they are more specific about the MSS, offering a description of their numbers or value. In his argument against Faustus (who is guilty of making accusations against Scripture without sufficient proof), Augustine lays out, more than once, his criteria for weighing the external evidence. First, he states that what Faustus has not done is make proper recourse to the truer, majority of, or more ancient MSS, or to the original language.[23] Augustine then rephrases this as a set of instructions for how to proceed properly: first consult the MSS from other regions, and then, if these disagree, rely upon the majority or more ancient of the copies; if uncertainty persists, go back to the original language.[24] This last point highlights that Augustine is working in Latin and thus in translation; while this statement would imply that the Greek evidence is secondary, it is clear from *On Christian Doctrine* that Augustine places the Latin evidence first merely in concession to those readers who do not know Greek. Rather, as he states here, the Greek evidence is to be preferred, but he also offers criteria to distinguish between MSS: preference should be

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[23] Augustine, *Faust.* 11.2 (ad exemplaria veriora, vel plurimum codicum, vel antiquorum, vel linguae praecedentis [CSEL 25:315]).

[24] Augustine, *Faust.* 11.2 (vel ex aliarum regionum codicibus, unde ipsa doctrina commeavit, nostra dubitatio dijudicaretur, vel si ibi quoque codices variarent, plures paucioribus, aut vetustiores recentioribus praeferrentur: et si adhuc esset incerta varietas, praecedens lingua, unde illud interpretatum est, consuleretur [CSEL 25:315]). Later, Augustine returns to this point, listing this time the older manuscripts or the language upon which the translation was based (vel de antiquioribus, vel de lingua praecedente; Augustine, *Faust.* 32.16; CSEL 25:776).

given to those copies found in the more learned and careful (doctiores et diligentiores) churches.[25]

A few themes emerge among Augustine's lists of criteria: the older the witnesses or the greater the number, the greater weight they have, although there is also a distinction among the MSS depending on the location or church from which they come. The Greek has preference over the Latin, as the language upon which the translation is based, although the Greek may be given secondary consideration when the Latin evidence is sufficient to be weighed properly. There is also a reference to the "truer" MSS, which may be an evaluation either of their accuracy or of their provenance (since when Augustine repeats his list of criteria, this element is replaced by the appeal to different regions). In practice, both Augustine and other fathers do refer to a number of these qualities among the external evidence, most notably the ancient copies, the majority of the copies, or the most accurate copies. The criteria enumerated by Augustine that are most lacking in application are references to regional variations or specific churches. Jerome, on the other hand, phrases this as a negative criterion, rejecting the copies associated with Lucian and Hesychius (which he says are preferred in Syria and Egypt, respectively), who may have undertaken their own recensions (of the Gospels, or the entire NT).[26] This is strikingly different from the common practice in reference to OT variants of citing one of the versions associated with Aquila, Symmachus, or Theodotion. Thus, while both Jerome and Augustine refer in principle to the MSS of various churches

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[25] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.11 (16)-15 (22); cf. E. Hill, trans., *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana* (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City, 1996), who says that the "learned and careful churches" likely refers to the churches of Carthage, Rome, and Milan, and that Augustine "would soon have won the right to include the Church of Hippo Regius among them" (164 n. 51).

[26] Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*. Cf. his preface to Chronicles, where he makes the geographical distinctions; these are in reference to the OT, but likely also apply to the NT.

or various scholars, in practice the citation of such evidence is actually quite rare. The closest corollary is the use of other patristic sources, as especially highlighted by Ambrosiaster.

Ambrosiaster offers another opinion on the quality of the Greek witnesses and spells out the list of criteria a little differently (see **Rom 5:14**, §103). Unlike Augustine, as well as Jerome and other Latin authors, Ambrosiaster actually has little respect for the Greek MSS of his day, not giving them pride of place simply because the Latin was translated from the Greek. Rather, he is aware of the variations among the Greek MSS, which he sees as due to too much meddling by heretics. The Latin copies, on the other hand, were translated from older, and therefore superior, Greek MSS. Thus, a Latin copy based on an older Greek exemplar is of better quality than a contemporary Greek MS, despite the fact that it is in the original language rather than in translation. In this, Ambrosiaster is showing the same preference as Augustine for the more ancient copies, and while his opinion of the Greek copies generally comes across as negative, he approaches the Greek tradition with more discernment than other Latin fathers, who often treat it as a monolithic whole and refer simply to "the Greek." Since Ambrosiaster does not trust the MSS alone, he also lists out the internal evidence that should be examined (reason and history; see above), together with another source of external evidence: "tradition," or patristic witnesses (in this case, he lists Tertullian, Victorinus, and Cyprian).

Along with Ambrosiaster, other fathers also cite the witness of earlier authors. For example, Jerome, in his commentary on **Matt 24:36**, notes that the variant "nor the Son" does not appear in the copies of Adamantius (Origen) or Pierius; his mention of

these scholars is likely a reference to their own commentaries on Matthew, not to recensions or MSS associated with them. As described above, while Jerome's appeal to their testimony suggests that he prefers the omission of the variant as the better reading, this does not stop him from offering lengthy comments on the variant, since it has been abused by Arius and Eunomius. But in another instance, Jerome uses the patristic evidence more decisively: in **Gal 3:1** (§140), Jerome notes the variant and then states that it does not appear in the copies of Origen, therefore he does not even bother to discuss it and immediately moves on with his commentary. Epiphanius also cites the evidence of other fathers, both the tradition from Clement, Origen, and Eusebius at **John 19:14** (§93), and Irenaeus's use of **Luke 22:43-44** (§73) in *Against Heresies*. In these cases, Epiphanius uses the patristic testimony to tip the scales in favor of the reading they attest or explain.

Among the other criteria listed by Augustine, one appealed to the most frequently, by the Latin fathers, is the Greek evidence. Ambrosiaster stands out as the lone exception of a negative opinion of the Greek tradition. The other writers do not always cite the Greek evidence, but when they do so, it is either used in a positive or neutral manner. In approximately eighty references to variants by Latin fathers, the Greek MSS are noted about a third of the time. Often they are referred to simply as a whole, "the Greek," but on other occasions there is some distinction among these copies. For example, at both **Rom 5:14** (§104) and **Phil 3:3** (§158) Augustine uses the same phrase to describe the variant as existing in "all or nearly all" (aut[em] omnes aut paene omnes) of the Greek copies. Likewise, Ambrose notes the variant in **Luke 7:35** (§66) as

appearing in many (plerique) Greek copies.[27] Marius Victorinus (**Gal 2:5**, §139), Hilary (**Luke 22:43-44**, §74), and Jerome (**John 7:53-8:11**, §87) also use various terms to refer to the majority of Greek and Latin MSS together supporting a particular reading. Another way that the authors discern among the Greek material is by mentioning the "ancient Greek" copies—this may be a reference to the fact that the Greek precedes the Latin and therefore is older, but it is more likely noting the older copies among the Greek evidence (hence, Augustine's comparative term "antiquioribus" could be a comparison either to the Latin MSS or to other Greek MSS). Ambrose (**Matt 24:36**, §38) and Augustine (**Luke 3:22**, §65) both use this in the negative, referring to a variant that does not occur in the older or ancient Greek copies, and Augustine also uses it in the positive, noting that the reading in **Matt 27:9** (§41) does appear in the older Greek.

Although the Latin fathers often make note of the Greek evidence, they each weigh that witness differently. As already noted, for Ambrosiaster, the Greek witnesses are perceived either negatively or of no consequence when weighing a variant. For Augustine, while he has a very high opinion of the Greek material, whether it is decisive in accepting or rejecting a variant may also depend on other factors. In **Matt 6:4** (§16), Augustine refers to a variant that appears in many Latin copies, but not at all in the Greek copies, which are prior to the Latin; he therefore does not feel the variant warrants further discussion. In this case, the Greek evidence alone is enough to outweigh the Latin copies. But in **Rom 5:14** (see above), while Augustine shows preference for the reading

[27] This case may be similar to that of Jerome on **Mark 16:9ff.** (§57), where his reference to "nearly all Greek copies" (omnibus Graeciae libris paene) is actually adapting Eusebius's testimony (§55) for a Latin audience. Since Ambrose is often dependent on Origen, it is possible that he is also adapting a comment by Origen about the (Greek) MS evidence for his Latin readers. Unfortunately, Origen's *Commentary on Luke* is not extant to verify this.

attested in the Greek, and makes the same point that the Latin was translated from the Greek (§105), that does not in this case prevent him from offering an explanation for the secondary reading since both readings have essentially the same meaning or application. Thus, while the external evidence determines his own preference, the internal evidence is neutral and allows that some may accept either reading as valid.

Similarly, at **Luke 7:35** (see above), Ambrose refers to the variant in the Greek MSS but does not accept or reject it; rather, he uses it to further elucidate his Latin lemma, as though both readings ultimately make the same point. He phrases his faith in the Greek evidence most directly in his mention of the variant in **Gal 4:8** (§141), where he states that the Greek copies have greater authority (potior auctoritas est). For Ambrose, then, the Greek evidence is not always used to override the Latin reading but it has enough authority to be considered an alternate reading worth exegesis or to decisively corroborate some of the Latin evidence.

In the process of discriminating among the various Greek copies, the criteria of both antiquity and the majority (two criteria listed by Augustine) come into play. While the Latin fathers refer to the older *Greek* copies, the Greek fathers need refer simply to the older or ancient copies. It may not be so surprising to find authors by the time of Basil (**Eph 1:1**, §143), Isidore (**Heb 9:17**, §181), or Socrates the historian (**1 John 4:3**, §184) referring back to the oldest MSS, but the example that is perhaps the most striking is that of Irenaeus. Irenaeus's discussion of the variant in **Rev 13:18** (§190) is the oldest extant reference to a variant, and yet Irenaeus himself cites the oldest MSS among his evidence. In full, he refers to three types of evidence: "all of the good and old copies" (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς σπουδαίοις καὶ ἀρχαίοις ἀντιγράφοις), the testimony of those who

knew John himself, and logic based on the use of numbers. Thus, even by the 2nd century, fathers were evaluating readings based on their antiquity, but in combination with the quality of the MSS, corroborating testimony, and internal evidence.

Besides the Greek fathers, Jerome as well refers simply to the oldest copies without distinguishing whether they are Greek or Latin. His reference to the variant in **Luke 14:27** (§70) is the most ambivalent of these examples, using the fact that this reading appears in the old (antiqua) copies as justification enough for using the verse as a proof text that he quotes without further comment. With two other verses, though, he is much more emphatic about the role of the older evidence. Jerome discusses **Matt 5:22** in two different works. In his writing *Against the Pelagians* (§9), Jerome quotes the verse with the phrase "without cause" and then says that most ancient copies (in plerisque antiquis codicibus) do not contain this addition. But his treatment of the verse here is mild compared to his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8). There, Jerome does not refer to the oldest copies but instead the most accurate or truest (ueris) copies, and he states unequivocally that the phrase "without cause," which does not appear in this superior external evidence, should be deleted from the MSS. But his determination is not based on external evidence alone; he also evaluates the internal evidence of the scriptural teaching on anger and passes judgment based on the combination of external and internal evidence. Jerome also discusses the textual problem in **Matt 13:35** in two different writings. In his *Commentary on Matthew* (§28), he attests only two readings in the MSS—the prophet, and Isaiah the prophet—as the source for the quotation of the psalm, but then he explains his conjecture that the original reading was Asaph, yet an early copyist thought this must be wrong and replaced the name with Isaiah. In his homily on

this psalm (§27), however, Jerome seems to attest MS evidence for the reading "Asaph the prophet," since he says that this is the reading found in all of the old copies (in omnibus ueteribus codicibus).

In light of Jerome's conjecture in the other discussion (i.e., in his commentary, but alluded to also in the homily), it appears that his reference to the oldest MSS is based not on direct knowledge of such a reading but on his supposition that this must be what the earliest copies contained. This also puts his comments on Matt 5:22 in an interesting light, since what in one reference was the "oldest copies," in another was "the truest copies" (raising the question whether his evaluation of the most accurate reading led him to assume that must also be the earlier reading, since he understood the variant to be a later addition). Similarily, we may wonder how the fathers determined that a reading existed in the oldest copies, whether that was always or typically based on access to older MSS, or whether at times it was due to a tradition traced back to earlier writers or teachers, or due to the father's own opinion. In the instance of Jerome, at least, it appears that rather than using the oldest evidence to accept or reject a variant, he used his evaluation of the variant to determine what must have the oldest reading—or, in the language of textual criticism, his reference to the oldest MSS may actually be his decision on the reading of the original text.

The example of Matt 5:22 from Jerome also highlights another criterion mentioned at least once by Augustine: the truer or more accurate MSS. Both the Greek and the Latin fathers make reference to such material, although it is not certain whether their terminology indicates exactly the same thing (and thus should be translated the same way in English). What Augustine refers to is the "exemplaria veriora" (*Faust.* 11.2; see

above). He uses the same term when discussing the variant in **1 Cor 15:5** (§125). He states that some copies contain the variant "eleven" (rather than "twelve"), which he believes to be a correction (or well-intentioned corruption) of the text, and he acknowledges it may be the "truer" (uerius) reading. In this context, Augustine appears to intend the most accurate copies. However, his ultimate judgment is based on the internal evidence that the exact number does not change the basic meaning of the text. Jerome also uses the same terminology, both for **Matt 5:22** (§8; see above) and for **Matt 21:31** (§36). In each case, he refers to the "true" (ueris) copies apparently as a description of the reading that he deems the most accurate or correct.

Among the Greek fathers, the term that may represent the same concept is ἀκριβής. In fact, this is the word used in a discussion of **Matt 5:22** falsely attributed to Athanasius (§6), which is very similar to Jerome's discussion of the variant in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8), where he uses the term "ueris." Other discussions may illuminate further how the Greek fathers apply this terminology. In his exposition of Luke 8:26, Titus of Bostra (§22) quotes the discussion of **Matt 8:28 parr.** by Origen (§21). While Origen prefaces his argument with a comment about the errors in the Greek MSS regarding names, it is Titus, in his introductory summary of Origen's testimony, who says that the accurate (τὰ ἀκριβῆ) copies contain the reading "Gergesenes." Thus, Titus has taken Origen's explanation of why "Gergesenes" is the correct reading, based on his knowledge of geography (or intrinsic probability; see below), and described the copies with this reading as the most accurate. The same logic lies behind John Chrysostom's more abbreviated discussion of **John 1:28** (§78), where he says that the more accurate copies (τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἀκριβέστερον) contain the reading

"Bethabara" because the alternate, Bethany, is not in the correct geographical location to fit the context.

Another instance is Eusebius's explanation of the variant in **Matt 13:35** (§26). While Jerome refers to the oldest copies based on his conjecture (see above), Eusebius also implies that the prophet intended is Asaph, but he merely notes that the accurate copies (τοῖς ἀκριβέσιν ἀντιγράφοις) read not "Isaiah the prophet" but simply "the prophet" (since Isaiah is not the correct source of the quote).[28] Another case weighed against the testimony of Scripture is Epiphanius's discussion of **John 19:14** (§93). The other fathers who witness this same tradition include the description of the conjectured scribal error here, but it is Epiphanius who thus determines that the accurate understanding (τὴν ἀκριβῆ . . . εἰσήγησιν) of the passage is the reading that has not been corrupted by this error.[29] In all of these examples, it is the other evidence or logic adduced by the father that determines the MSS containing the variant are accurate, not vice versa. So, while the accurate copies are valued, the determination of their accuracy seems to be established by the judgment of the individual variant based on other criteria, not upon the general quality of the MS itself. On the level of an individual reading, the accuracy refers to whether the variant is geographically, scripturally, or otherwise correct, while on the level of the entire MS, it refers to a copy which has not been greatly corrupted by the copyist (since if a MS is not accurate, that lack of accuracy is attributed to an error on the part of the scribe).

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[28] See also Origen on **Rom 4:3** (§102, in Additional Texts), where he states that the most accurate reading is "Abram" not "Abraham," and he assumes Paul would have been accurate in his quotation of Gen 15:6.

[29] Later, the *Chronicon Paschale* (§92) phrases this in the familiar language that the accurate copies (τὰ ἀκριβῆ βιβλία)—including the copy from John's own hand, which is housed at Ephesus—have the reading "third" (i.e., without the error).

One other interesting reference to accurate MSS is Eusebius's evaluation of the evidence for the longer ending of Mark.[30] The context of this discussion is addressing a potential discrepancy between the resurrection appearances in Mark and John. Eusebius says that one solution to this problem is to look at the MS evidence, which largely lacks the verse in Mark (16:9) that involved the discrepancy. As he describes this external evidence, the longer ending does not appear in all the copies (μὴ ἐν ἅπασιν . . . τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις); he later rephrases this in the positive, that the Gospel ends with 16:8 in nearly all the copies (σχεδὸν ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις), or, at any rate, in the accurate copies (τὰ γοῦν ἀκριβῆ τῶν ἀντιγράφων). Eusebius clearly aligns the majority and the accurate MSS, but what he does not clarify is his basis for considering those copies the most accurate. Based on the context, it may be a reference to the least problematic reading (i.e., if John is correct, then the reading which contradicts it is not accurate), or it suggests that the longer ending is considered a later addition by someone other than Mark (just as John 19:14 or Matt 13:35 are understood to include later attempts to "correct" the text). According to this evidence, Eusebius lays out the first solution, that the additional text and therefore the problem it presents may be dismissed as superfluous (περιττὸν). But Eusebius also presents a second solution: nothing in Scripture should be ignored or discarded, so another explanation must be found that assumes Mark 16:9 may be a valid reading.

This example from Eusebius brings up another major criterion noted by Augustine, the majority of MSS. At least a tenth of the explicit references to variants

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[30] Two other examples that have not been examined here are both by Severus. His discussion of **Mark 16:9ff.** (§58) is simply repeating Eusebius, which raises the question whether his reference to the variant at **Mark 16:2** (§54, where he again refers to the most accurate copies) is also repeating Eusebius or another author.

include a mention of either several, many, or most MSS, whether Greek, Latin, or a combination of the two. It is not clear that this always means a greater number than the general reference to "some" MSS, which also commonly appears. Nor is reference made to how many copies are included in "most," so that there is no indication of how many MSS a father may generally be taking into account, or based on what information (personal access to MSS, tradition, testimony by others, etc.). As with the category of Greek evidence, in general the majority of MSS alone is not enough to judge a variant to be the preferred reading, but it may warrant exegesis of the variant (e.g., Jerome/Didymus on **1 Cor 15:52**, §134) or corroborate the internal evidence (e.g., Acacius on **1 Cor 15:51**, §127). One noteworthy example of the latter is Augustine's discussion of **Matt 27:9** (§41): while the minority reading ("the prophet") is the more accurate, he does not go along with the explanation adopted by Jerome that the less accurate reading ("Jeremiah the prophet") is a scribal error; based on the fact that "Jeremiah" is found in most MSS, along with the more ancient Greek MSS, and that it is the reading most difficult to explain, he accepts this reading as original and therefore must explain why Matthew would write the wrong name. Thus, Augustine agrees with the majority witness, but uses that in combination with other external and internal evidence.

The situations that stand out the most, however, are those where the author contradicts the majority witness based on other evidence. One possible example is Basil's use of **Luke 22:36** (§71). The initial version of Basil's text appears to cite the imperative of the verb and explains that this is not a command but a prophecy (i.e., a statement about the future), since the imperative mood is often used this way. In an early

revision of the *Asceticon*, likely by Basil himself or in his own day, an aside is added that the majority of copies (τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἀντιγράφων) actually read the future indicative (in agreement with Basil's own interpretation). However, the fact that this is the majority reading does not give rise to either replacing the reading in the *Asceticon* or changing the explanation to fit the majority reading. A better, and more blatant, example is in Origen's discussion of **John 1:28** (§80). He starts off by stating that "Bethany" is found in nearly all of the copies (σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις), along with that of Heracleon, and appears to be an earlier (πρότερον) reading. Yet, he then proceeds to reject this reading based on geography and etymology, finding "Bethabara" to be the preferred reading (what John Chrysostom refers to as the more accurate reading [§78]). Therefore, based on internal evidence and the assumption that the evangelist would know the correct geography, Origen easily overturns the external evidence of almost all MSS. Several instances where Origen conjectures an emendation in the text, in locations where he attests no variants and no variants are known today, further support this idea since he is clearly going against the agreement of all MSS (e.g., **Matt 5:45** [§14]; **Matt 21:9** [§34]; **Matt 26:63** [§40]; **Eph 2:4** [§147], all in Additional Texts). As the case of **Matt 19:19** (§32) especially makes clear, this is due to Origen's lack of faith in the scribes.

Therefore, concerning the criteria spelled out by Augustine and Ambrosiaster, several of these are used quite frequently. Augustine's listed criteria—the truer, majority of, or more ancient MSS, or the original language—are all employed by multiple authors.[31] Most frequently, the Latin authors refer back to the original language (the

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[31] There are two other criteria, or descriptions of the MS evidence, not discussed here that are worth noting. Jerome refers to the "authentic" (authenticis) copies of **Titus 3:15** (§173), in parallel with his reference to the Greek copies. Also, Epiphanius mentions the "unrevised" (ἀδιορθώτοις) copies

Greek), or both Greek and Latin fathers refer in some way to the majority or a great number of MSS. Less frequently, reference is made to the more accurate (truer) copies or the oldest. Also, Ambrosiaster's criterion of tradition, or the patristic evidence, is also used a handful of times. Other than the frequency with which the various criteria are employed, though, there is no strong sense of a hierarchy among them (in contrast to what is implied by Augustine's prioritized list). Jerome gives more credence to patristic evidence than Origen does to the majority of MSS (both based on the same principle of the credibility of the witness, whether a trusted name or a nameless scribe). The accurate copies have the closest correlation to accepted readings in situations where the alternate reading is rejected, but the accuracy is typically determined based on other, often internal, evidence. Nor is it clear that these criteria should actually be called "criteria" in the sense that they are used to judge between variants; in some cases, referring to the MS evidence is simply a statement of fact to explain why more than one reading is being exegeted. When the external evidence does help sway the verdict on the best reading, it is usually in combination with some form of internal evidence. In other cases, the internal evidence may outweigh the external, even the majority of MSS, but it does not appear that the reverse happens.

The church fathers' use of external evidence also brings to light another interesting fact, a criterion that is actually used in the opposite way in modern textual criticism. Modern text criticism views harmonization between scriptural texts as a move away from the original reading: the assumption is that scribes tended to harmonize, especially in terms of Gospel parallels, so that the readings in most discord with their

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containing **Luke 22:43-44** (§73), since he believes the orthodox have "fixed" the text by removing the passage.

parallels are more likely original.[32] But the church fathers, because they expect harmony among the authorial texts, often assume that contradictions between parallel scriptural accounts are due to later errors. Therefore, the fathers at times appear to treat the different Gospels as though they are additional MSS of the same text (since they are multiple witnesses to the same historical account). Because of this, in some cases it is ambiguous when a father cites the reading of "gospels" whether he means copies of the same Gospel or the parallel in another Gospel (e.g., Jerome on **Matt 11:19** [§24]).[33] One example is the anonymous philosopher quoted by Macarius Magnes; when pointing out the contradictions between the last words from Jesus on the cross, three of the quotes are from different Gospels and a fourth is a variant in **Mark 15:34** (§53), yet no distinction is made between Gospel parallels and a variant within one Gospel.

While this example is citing a non-Christian, the Christian scholars exhibit similar ambiguity. Origen's lengthy discussion of the reading "Gergesenes" and its alternates in **Matt 8:28 parr.** (§21) at no point distinguishes between the reading of the different Gospels (he expects all of the Gospel writers to be accurate, so the best option geographically must be the proper reading in all of the Gospels). In his defense of how he quoted **Matt 5:32** (§11), Augustine cites the various Gospel parallels, not making clear distinction between what is found in copies of Matthew and what is in the other Gospels. It is also the expectation of Gospel harmony, especially in the case of words of Jesus, that leads Origen to conjecture corrections when the Gospels contradict each other;

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[32] See, for example, Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 303.

[33] While Didymus's reference to "some Gospels" containing the story of the woman caught in adultery likely refers to copies of John (**7:53-8:11** [§85]), it is also possible that his reference includes copies of Luke (since the pericope is also found there) or even noncanonical gospels. See also Epiphanius, who points out a variant in "a certain copy of the Gospels," apparently noting the difference between **Luke 2:4** and **John 7:42** (§63 in Additional Texts), but doing so in the language that typically refers to variants.

this is clearest in the case of Origen's discussion of **Matt 19:19** (§32), where there is no extant variant, so the only "external evidence" that he cites for his proposed reading is Mark and Luke (cf. **Matt 26:63** [§40]). This ambiguity is not universal, however; in other instances, the fathers discern clearly between the Synoptic parallels and the variant within a specific Gospel (e.g., Epiphanius on **Matt 8:28 parr.** [§20]; Origen on **Matt 16:20** [§30]; Apollinaris on **Mark 6:8** [§51]). In general, though, the line between the MS evidence and Gospel parallels is often fuzzy, if not nonexistent, so that the witness of another evangelist is comparable to the testimony of a previous church father.

2.2. Internal Evidence

2.2.1. Transcriptional Probabilities

When assigning variants to those who copied, translated, or made use of the texts, the church fathers sometimes simply refer to a "scribal error," without determining whether it is intentional or unintentional, or what the exact cause may be.[34] There are also more indirect references, where scribes are not named but a passive construction is used to indicate something that has been added or omitted—the implication, then, is that whoever copied the text is responsible for the addition or omission.[35] The fathers at times ambiguously cite "some" or "someone" as making the alteration, without specifying if it is a scribe or another person, such as a translator or a heretic intentionally emending the text.[36] But the fathers also offer discussions with much more description and detail about

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[34] See Origen, **Matt 27:9** (§45); Eusebius, **Mark 1:2** (§48).

[35] See Jerome, **Matt 5:22** (§8); **Matt 24:36** (§39). See also **Eph 2:4** (§147), where Origen uses a passive construction, but Jerome translates it as active, attributing the fault to an ignorant scribe.

[36] See Origen, **Matt 5:22** (§10); Epiphanius, **2 Tim 4:10** (§171). Cf. Origen, **Luke 23:45** (§76).

how certain errors came to be, and who exactly was responsible for initiating or propagating them. Eusebius's exposition of **Matt 27:9** (§42), where the incorrect attribution of a quote to Jeremiah rather than Zechariah must be explained, summarizes well the options when encountering such a problem in the text: one must consider whether a change has been made through ill intention, or whether there was an error in copying, through a careless mistake—in other words, whether the error was intentional or unintentional.

2.2.1.1. Unintentional Changes

Among the unintentional or accidental changes attributed to scribes, one type of error frequently noted was the difference of a single character, changing either a number or the meaning of a word. Irenaeus provides the earliest example of discussing a variant, and he attributes this to a scribe. He supposes that in **Rev 13:18** (§190) the difference between the middle numeral of 666 and 616 is due to a scribe mistaking one number for another (the scribe stretched out ξ into ι), since this is a common occurrence. The same suggestion is the basis for the tradition passed down relating to the hour of the crucifixion in John and Mark (**John 19:14**).[37] Eusebius (§94) describes that a scribe mistook a gamma for episemon when the straight crossbar on Γ was curved upward and read as ϛ. Epiphanius (§93) describes similarly that the two characters were confused because they both have a crossbar written from left to right.

[37] Interestingly, if this tradition goes back to Clement of Alexandria, as Epiphanius says (§93), then it dates to around the same time as Irenaeus (late 2nd cent.), perhaps providing some insight into the types of changes made, or thought to be made, in the first century that the NT was copied.

The difference of one stroke or one letter could also change a word and its meaning. While neither specifically name scribes, both Jerome and Isidore point out mistakes of this kind. Jerome notes that in **1 Cor 13:3** (§124), the difference seen in the Latin goes back to the Greek, where the two verbs differ only by one letter; thus, he says, an error has emerged. Likewise, Isidore refers to the difference of only one stroke in **Heb 9:17** (§181), turning a τ into a π, which he suggests was done out of ignorance. Such mistakes also may simply be due to inattention to detail, or, as Jerome puts it, to scribes who were more asleep than awake.[38]

2.2.1.2. Intentional Changes

The fathers also accused the scribes both of making intentional changes, and of creating new errors in the text through their ignorant or incompetent attempts to remove an error. As Jerome explains it, relative to **Matt 13:35** (§27) as well as similar variants (see §§43, 95), the earliest scribes encountered what they perceived to be an error in the text (here, the name Asaph), but in their ignorance (their unfamiliarity with the name), they helpfully emended the text—and thus, in "correcting" the error, they made an error. Epiphanius makes similar accusations concerning the appearance of a name, in **Matt 1:11** (§1). He assumes that the original text of Matthew contained fourteen generations, as Matthew enumerates. Therefore, Epiphanius believes that the list was subsequently truncated when two Jeconiahs appearing next to each other in the list (a father and son) were "corrected" to only one occurrence of the name. Epiphanius seems to allow that the

[38] See the discussion on scribes in Chapter 6. Cf. Theophylact on **John 19:14** (§96), who is quoting or paraphrasing Eusebius (§94, which is also either a quotation or paraphrase); Theophylact refers to the variant being due to an inattention of the transcriptionists (ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπροσεξίας τῶν μεταγραφόντων), which could be either a quote or an interpretation of Eusebius.

mistake was well-intended, in an attempt to improve the text, but he refers to those who made the correction as unlearned (ἀμαθῶν) and making the change out of ignorance (ἀγνοίᾳ). Augustine is more charitable (although, he does not name copyists specifically) when he refers to the change in **1 Cor 15:5** (§125). Again, he recognizes this as an intentional change, that some who encounter the number twelve are troubled by this reading since with the absence of Judas, there could only be eleven disciples at the time of the resurrection appearances.[39] Therefore, they emend the text; although Augustine does not use the same statement as Jerome, it could also apply here: in deleting the perceived error, they instead created an error.

Besides charging scribes with intentional changes, the fathers also pinned these emendations on opponents or heretics, deeming these errors orthodox—or, more often, heterodox—corruptions.[40] There is at least one case in which the writer is crediting the emendation to the orthodox. Epiphanius states that **Luke 22:43-44** (§73), which appears in the unedited copies (τοῖς ἀδιορθώτοις ἀντιγράφοις) of Luke, has been removed by the orthodox who misunderstood this text rather than recognizing how it reinforced the portrait of the humanity of Jesus. Hilary (§74), on the other hand, is uncertain whether these verses have been intentionally removed or added, but he is still aware that they may

[39] A catena on this verse attributed to Oecumenius (§126) summarizes the same argument, simply stating that one possible reason for the discrepancy between "eleven" and "twelve" is a scribal error.

[40] This, of course, is alluding to B. D. Ehrman's book *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). As Ehrman examines particular variants, his purpose is typically the same as that of the fathers (to explain how a reading arose for doctrinal reasons), which makes his work more of a modern parallel to what the fathers were doing than a resource that examines the charges leveled by the fathers against their opponents (the latter of which is of more interest here).

be used by the heretics, and so he feels the need to address them.[41] More commonly, though, the accusation is that an emendation was made for the wrong reasons, usually so that the text will read in support of a particular doctrine. Ambrosiaster explains this very thing: although he does not specifically attribute the variant at **Rom 5:14** (§103) to heresy, he does say that the difference arose when someone who could not win an argument altered the text in order to provide textual support for that position. This is the reason why Ambrosiaster has little faith in the Greek MSS; he believes that heretics and schismatics have freely altered the text to fit their own theologies, which is why there are so many variants within the Greek tradition.

Many of the alterations charged to heretics or opponents revolve around issues relating to Christology or the nature of the Trinity. Writing against the Arians, Ambrose argues that those who have falsified the Scriptures have also interpolated the phrase "nor the Son" in **Matt 24:36** (§38) in blasphemy against the divinity of the Son.[42] Another text that became embroiled in Christological debate was **Heb 2:9**; without specifying who was responsible, Theodore of Mopsuestia (§179) says that some have made the absurd alteration of changing "without" to "by the grace," as an intentional change due to their own misunderstanding of the passage. Later, the opposite charge was made concerning this verse (see §§176, 180), that the Nestorians (likely including Theodore, who was condemned as a forerunner for this heresy) had corrupted the text to read "without God" in order to separate the divinity and humanity of Jesus at his crucifixion.[43]

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[41] On Luke 22:43-44, see Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 187-94.

[42] On Matt 24:36, see Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 91-92.

[43] On Heb 2:9, see Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 146-50.

The church historian Socrates makes a similar claim about the variant at **1 John 4:3** (§184), that those who wish to separate the divine and human natures have corrupted the text.[44] Another Trinitarian issue arises, namely the relationship of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, in a variant from **Rom 8:11** (§109); in a dialogue between a Macedonian and an orthodox person, the latter adduces this verse as evidence for the orthodox position, but the Macedonian claims the orthodox have altered the text to suit their theology.

In some cases, though, the fathers accused certain people of emending the text for other reasons. At **Luke 23:45** (§76), where a variant explains that the darkness over the earth was caused by an eclipse, Origen allows the possibility that someone added this simply for clarification, but he thinks it was more likely added by someone trying to undermine the Gospels by explaining away a supernatural event as a natural one.[45] Concerning **John 7:53-8:11** (§84), Augustine attributes the removal of this passage to men who are either of little faith or hostile to the faith, one possible reason being that they believe the example of forgiving a woman caught in adultery will give their wives license to sin. Thus, the church fathers articulated a number of reasons why a scribe, or other editor or user of the text, would intentionally make a change or correction. Whether the alterations were well-intended or done for more polemical reasons, the general consensus seems to be that such changes are never an improvement, but that the text is better left as it originally stood.

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[44] On 1 John 4:3, see Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 125-35.

[45] On Luke 23:45, see W. C. Kannaday, *Apologetic Discourse and the Scribal Tradition: Evidence of the Influence of Apologetic Interests on the Text of the Canonical Gospels* (SBL Text-Critical Studies 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 97-98.

2.2.2. Intrinsic Probabilities

While the fathers often had their doubts about scribal abilities, or the hands of others that felt free to emend the text, they had the utmost faith in the NT writers—the evangelists and apostles—and in the veracity of the original version of the text. The patristic writers were themselves authors who knew the potential for their own words to become mangled or misrepresented through careless transcription (see Chap. 6). Between that and their theological beliefs in the infallibility of the scriptural message, their firm foundation when investigating the intrinsic probabilities of what the author would have written is that, essentially, the author is always right. This related to grammar, theology, geography, citation of Scripture, and so forth. Augustine expresses this the most directly when, in response to Faustus's claim that Paul contradicted himself on some points of theology, he explains that where there appears to be a contradiction in Scripture, "it is not allowable to say, The author of this book is mistaken; but either the manuscript is faulty, or the translation is wrong, or you have not understood."[46]

In practice, it is clear that this same assumption underlies the discussion of variants. If there are two readings, and one of them is incorrect in some way, the assumption is not that the original reading was incorrect and a later scribe corrected it, but just the opposite: the original author was correct, and a later scribe corrupted the reading. There is one interesting case where a father diverges from this: Augustine prefers the more difficult reading in **Matt 27:9**, accepting that it is more logical for

[46] *Faust*. 11.5; NPNF 1.4:180 (non licet dicere: auctor huius libri non tenuit ueritatem, sed aut codex mendosus est aut interpres errauit aut tu non intellegis [CSEL 25:320]). For a similar statement, see Augustine, *Ep.* 82 (to Jerome).

someone to later correct the text to the name of the proper prophet, rather than for someone to add a name that is clearly wrong. But, since Augustine cannot violate the principle that the author is never wrong, he is left with a different dilemma: how Matthew could write the name of what is apparently the wrong prophet without Matthew himself or the scriptural text actually being wrong. But Augustine stands alone in creating this dilemma. The way that other fathers, such as Jerome and Eusebius, deal with this same variant shows that they approached the text with a different logic, one that assumes if anyone is incorrect, it is a later copyist of the Gospel.

This same point is articulated very simply in Rufinus's translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans.* When weighing the two readings in **Rom 7:6** (§107), the commentator here (whether Rufinus or Origen) determines that one is "both truer and more correct" (et verius est et rectius). While it is not spelled out in detail what the criteria are for determining what it is true and correct, the value statement itself is meaningful: the more correct reading is the preferred reading. This accords well with the value that the fathers placed on the more accurate MSS. Correctness or accuracy could include a range of categories. The example of the name of the prophet quoted, as addressed by Augustine, is but one such situation. This surfaces not only with Matt 27:9 but also with **Matt 13:35**. In both cases, the fathers who discuss the variants begin with the same basic assumption (usually implied rather than stated outright): the author originally wrote the name of the correct prophet he was citing. If there is any error or contradiction, then, if must be explained as a later development. Jerome deals with these two verses in answer to a claim by Porphyry similar to what Augustine addressed with Faustus. Porphyry has used the discrepancy at Matt 13:35 as evidence of the evangelist's

ignorance; Jerome, in turn, must defend the Gospel writer, and thus he shifts the blame to the scribes.

Origen also defends the knowledge and accuracy of the evangelists in the matter of geography. In his *Commentary on John*, he deals with two different passages where variants attest a variety of place names, at **John 1:28** (§80) and **Matt 8:28 parr.** (§21). While explaining the latter, Origen states that "the evangelists, men attentively learned in all things Jewish, would not have said something clearly false and easy to refute." He expects that they were familiar with Jewish names and Palestinian geography, and so by describing his own knowledge of the geography of the area, he is also explaining the more correct and therefore original reading.

The same assumption about the accuracy of the evangelists also applies more broadly to Scripture as a whole. Therefore, when there was an apparent contradiction between different Gospels, the fathers again appealed to the possibility of a scribal error rather than assuming that the Gospel writers would contradict one another. Jerome, then, could address the difference between the hour of the crucifixion in **John 19:14** and the Synoptic parallels in the same context that he discussed Matthew apparently citing the wrong prophets (Matt 13:35; 27:9) because all three instances involved the agreement between different parts of Scripture. The same issue arose with apparent contradictions between the resurrection appearances, particularly with regard to **Mark 16:9ff**. While part of the argument over the discrepancy dealt with the MS evidence for the longer ending, the very reason for discussing the variant is telling: if the Gospels disagree, and there is a variant in the MSS, then the disagreement is likely the fault of the scribes (or here, a later editor who added the longer ending) rather than the scriptural authors.

If so much faith was placed in the authors and in Scripture in general, it is no surprise to find the fathers so often appealing to the context of a reading—whether simply the immediate context, or the broader context of the writer's works or Scripture as a whole—to evaluate the variants. However, the context could work both for and against a variant: while sometimes a reading was dismissed because it did not fit the context, more often if both readings had equal meaning, or equally valid meanings, within the context, then neither would be discarded as incorrect or secondary.

One example of where church fathers use the immediate context as a criterion to discern between readings is **1 Cor 15:51**. Both Acacius of Caesarea (§127) and Didymus of Alexandria (§130) (possibly both attesting a tradition that goes back to Origen) offer the same basic argument: while some copies of v. 51 have "we all will be changed" and others read "we will not all be changed," v. 52 reads (in all copies) "*we* will be changed."[47] Since v. 52 is clearly qualifying who will be changed, they argue, then it would not make sense for v. 51 to say that everyone will be changed. Thus, as Acacius puts it, the variant with the negative is more fitting (magis . . . ueritati), or, to put it the opposite way, as does Didymus, if v. 51 says that we *all* will be changed, to say again in the next verse that *we* will be changed would be superfluous (περιττόν). The context of the following verse, then, determines which is the proper reading.

In **Eph 5:14**, the close context is likewise used to weigh the variant. While Jerome (§153) focuses primarily on discussing the variant "Christ will touch you," he says he will let the reader decide whether this is the correct reading, but his final

[47] The distinction between vv. 51 and 52 is clearer in the Greek, as seen in the fragment of Didymus, whereas the emphatic use of the pronoun in v. 52 is obscured in Jerome's Latin translation of both authors.

statement on the matter is that this variant does not fit the interpretation or sense of the context. Theodore of Mopsuestia (§154) likewise states it as a negative judgment, that this reading does not fit the context, while Theodoret (§155) phrases it the opposite way, saying that the other reading, "Christ will shine on you," is more suited to the context (which refers to light). All three, then, opt for the same reading, and apparently for the same reason: the immediate context.

In his exposition on **Rom 12:11**, Ambrosiaster (§111) extends the scope a little more broadly when he considers how the larger context of the entire letter impacts the reading in this passage. Since the variant is an instruction for the audience to "serve the Lord," Ambrosiaster determines that it is unlikely that Paul wrote this because he shows elsewhere in the letter that his Roman audience is already actively serving the Lord (so he does not need to tell them to do so). In other cases, the fathers also expand the context ever further to incorporate all of Paul's writings. Theodore of Mopsuestia exemplifies this best when he examines the variant in **Heb 2:9** (§179)—a letter he considers to have been written by Paul. Theodore determines the variant "by the grace of God" to be absurd, primarily because it does not fit how Paul uses this phrase elsewhere. Theodore then gives examples of how Paul typically refers to grace to prove that the variant in Hebrews does not fit the pattern.

The church fathers also used the wider range of Scripture to weigh the validity of variants. In this, they were consistent not only with their theology of the inspiration of Scripture (and therefore divine authorship), but also with the general ancient principle often cited as "interpreting Homer by Homer," or interpreting an individual portion of

text by what is deemed the general corpus or genre within which it belongs.[48] Origen and Jerome both exhibit this practice when examining **Matt 5:22**, although they use different Scripture citations. In his *Commentary on Ephesians* (§10), Origen uses this as an opportunity to point out that some incorrectly read this verse in Matthew to say that anger is sometimes acceptable. He then quotes Psalm 36, therefore using a text from Paul and one from the Psalms to argue against the variant reading in Matthew. Jerome addresses this variant in a couple of places; in his *Commentary on Matthew* (§8), he too weighs the concept of offering an acceptable excuse for anger by adducing other Scripture, both from the Synoptics and from James. Thus, both Origen and Jerome (or, in the latter case, perhaps Jerome repeating Origen) refer to at least two other locations in Scripture to determine whether Matthew would originally have referred to all anger or only anger "without cause."

Another example from Ambrosiaster helps to summarize the patristic usage of context and internal evidence. In his discussion of **Gal 2:5** (§137), Ambrosiaster articulates the same practice found in a number of commentaries on this text. While one reading has, "for an hour we yielded," another reads, "for an hour we did not yield." The commentators, then, examine the variants by the truth of what happened, whether Paul did or did not yield to his opponents (and whether in the case only of Titus's circumcision, or on other matters of the law). One piece of evidence is the circumcision of Timothy, which is recorded in Acts 16. Other evidence is sought from Paul's letters to see how he responded to additional situations of legalism and circumcision. As Ambrosiaster puts it, they appeal to history and the letters (i.e., Acts and the Pauline

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[48] For more on this, see Chapter 1.

epistles). Here we see a partial application of the principle he lays out elsewhere, that variants should be evaluated by reason, history, and tradition. Ambrosiaster uses reason to determine whether there is agreement between the variant and the witness of Scripture, including both Paul's own testimony and the history recorded in Scripture.

3. The Results of Textual Analysis in Literary Contexts

The criteria examined above, using the categories laid out by modern textual criticism, imply that the purpose of applying textual analysis or invoking such criteria is in order to make a choice between two or more readings. However, what we find among the patristic discussions, especially among the commentaries, is a tendency not to choose between readings as long as neither leads to an inappropriate understanding of the passage. This accords with the conservative method found among some of the Alexandrian classical scholars who pioneered textual analysis, exemplified also by Origen's Hexapla, to present all readings along with notations rather than deleting anything. Origen says of his work on the Hexapla that the words in the LXX that did not appear in the Greek, he let them stand in the text marked with an obelus because he did not dare to remove the words entirely (οὐ τολμήσαντες αὐτὰ πάντη περιελεῖν); Origen simply marked the text, and the reader could do with it what he or she pleased.[49] A similar sentiment is echoed by Eusebius when discussing the longer ending of Mark: despite the overwhelming external evidence against this ending, some might say that they

[49] Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14 (GCS, Or 10:388); see §32 on **Matt 19:19** (in Additional Texts).

dare not set aside anything that appears in the text of the Gospels (οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν τολμῶν ἀθετεῖν τῶν ὁπωσοῦν ἐν τῇ τῶν Εὐαγγελίων γραφῇ φερομένων).[50]

The same mentality is expressed regarding not only the text but also the interpretation of the text. Long before such comments appeared in modern scholarship, Pamphilus and Eusebius noted in their defense of Origen that his tendency in his exegetical works was to present multiple interpretations and allow the reader to decide between them.[51] Jerome considered this to be part of the purpose and structure of commentaries: he defends his extensive use of Origen's material by explaining that the nature of a commentary is to lay out the views of earlier scholars, even (or especially) when those views are contradictory, in order to let the audience choose for themselves which is the right interpretation.[52] In fact, this is exactly what Jerome does for **Eph 5:14** (§153), presenting an interpretation of the variant and his opinion of it, but ultimately stating, "Whether these things are true or not I leave to the reader's decision."[53]

A similar approach may perhaps be found by examining another quality of early Christian commentaries. There was a tendency among the church fathers to not always quote Scripture verbatim but to often paraphrase or cite from memory (which is one reason that using their scriptural quotations as evidence for NT variants is such a complicated matter). It is in regard to this that L. Vaganay and C.-B. Amphoux state: "It

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[50] Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1 (PG 22:937, 940); see §55 on **Mark 16:9ff**.

[51] Pamphilus and Eusebius, *Apology for Origen* 1.3. Cf. A. Grafton and M. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 204: "Origen, who realized the mystery and obscurity of the Scriptures, often gave more than one interpretation at a time, allowing the *prudens lector* to choose the best one."

[52] Jerome, *Ruf.* 1.16, 22. Cf. E. A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 141.

[53] Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 5:14; Heine, 224.

seems clear that what they saw in the text was a deeper meaning which could not be affected by any kind of textual alterations."[54] This assessment also describes well the fathers' approach to variants: what they found in the text was a level of meaning that went beyond the individual words, and which was not always impacted by textual variations. Perhaps the best illustration of this is the number of instances where the variant in question was a negative particle, so that the two different readings were exact opposites, and yet multiple fathers could explain both readings as contributing to the same understanding of the text.[55]

This is not to say that the fathers never offered an opinion on one reading being better than another, since they certainly did, but their general tendency was to present the merits of both readings whenever possible. Yet, there were even times when they did show a preference for a reading, but because of how the rejected variant was being abused by some (typically heretics), it was necessary to exegete the variant anyway.[56] This again points back to Eusebius's comments on the longer ending of Mark: even the strong external evidence against it is not reason enough to simply dismiss the text as spurious and refuse to address its content. As long as there are people in the church who accept that ending as Scripture and who may therefore be swayed by wrong exegesis of it, then the passage cannot be ignored. Because, the ultimate concern of the commentator was not the original text, or even the best text, but the best understanding of the text.

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[54] L. Vaganay and C.-B. Amphoux, *An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (trans. J. Heimerdinger; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 92.

[55] For example, see the various discussions of **Rom 5:14** (esp. Augustine [§§104, 105] and Origen [§106]); **1 Cor 15:51** (esp. Rufinus [§133]); **Gal 2:5** (esp. Ambrosiaster [§137] and Jerome [§138]); **Col 2:18** (Augustine [§161] and Jerome [§162]).

[56] See Ambrose (§38) and Jerome (§39) on **Matt 24:36**.

Thus, when Rufinus encounters two different readings, one in Origen's Greek commentary and a different one in his Latin lemma, he is hesitant to "disturb the tradition or prejudice the truth" by removing or rejecting either variation, "especially since both contribute to edification."[57] As long as both readings contribute to the same end—the edifying use of Scripture and the best meaning of the text—then there is no need to judge between them. When judgments are made, it is generally in favor of accuracy or orthodoxy. In a homily, such a judgment may necessarily be much more terse than in a commentary, but behind both is the same basic pastoral concern. While criteria are applied to the NT text and sometimes lead to a judgment or a statement of preference (usually when the external evidence is qualified by a value such as "ancient" or "accurate," or when the variant is blamed on a scribal error), the external evidence is not always invoked as a grounds for judgment—at least, not on the part of the commentator. Often, the readings of "some copies" or "other copies" are presented as basic information for the reader's understanding. The reader may then determine whether, based on the external or internal evidence, one reading should be preferred over the other. The commentator is simply presenting both sides of the issue for the reader to decide (not unlike the function of a textual apparatus).

[57] See §114 on **Rom 12:13** (FC 104:214).

CHAPTER 6

NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM,
ANCIENT AND MODERN

This chapter will summarize the textual analysis of the church fathers as applied to the NT and compare that to modern textual criticism. In order to do that, it is first necessary to once again widen the scope and consider how explicit references to variants relate to the fuller context of textual analysis. This includes the question of whether the fathers who were commenting on the variants were also engaged in creating editions or recensions of the text. The issue of who was working on the form of the text brings up the relationship between scholars and scribes, or commentators and copyists, particularly the opinion that many fathers had of scribes and their abilities. Then, the question is finally addressed, how patristic textual analysis compares with the modern discipline of textual criticism. The chapter then closes with a summary of what may be learned from explicit references to variants and how the fathers approached the NT text.

1. Textual Analysis by the Church Fathers and Modern Textual Criticism

There are varying opinions about whether the church fathers engaged in "textual criticism," in a modern sense, and whether they were any good at it. In describing the history of NT textual criticism, some text-critical introductions include a brief section on

the church fathers,[1] while others begin around the time of the Reformation.[2] In studies of individual text-critical problems, the results are also mixed. J. Kelhoffer states:

> Scholars have long known, as J. Burgon put it, that the early church fathers were "but very children in the Science of Textual Criticism." The naiveté with which "text-critical" problems were sometimes dismissed is perhaps nowhere stated more bluntly in all of early Christian literature than in [Eusebius's] *ad Marinum*: if one is able to harmonize two passages like Matt 28 and Mark 16, it is appropriate, and even preferable, to ignore manuscript evidence questioning the authenticity of one of the passages.[3]

But Kelhoffer's judgment applies to Eusebius and those who followed his example; surely if there was one true text critic among the church fathers, it was Origen. Yet, after examining Origen's explicit references to NT variants, Metzger concludes that

> [Origen] was an acute observer of textual phenomena but was quite uncritical in his evaluation of their significance. . . . On the whole his treatment of variant readings is most unsatisfactory from the standpoint of modern textual criticism.

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[1] B. M. Metzger and B. D. Ehrman (*The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* [4th ed.; New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005]) have perhaps the most extensive discussion of patristic textual criticism, a chapter entitled "The Origins of Textual Criticism as a Scholarly Discipline" (pp. 197-204). P. D. Wegner (*A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods & Results* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006]) includes short paragraphs on Irenaeus, Origen, and Jerome (pp. 208-9) before jumping forward to Erasmus in his chapter on "A Brief History of New Testament Textual Criticism."

[2] The subtitle of the English translation of Kurt and Barbara Aland's introduction is "An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism" (*The Text of the New Testament* [2nd ed.; trans. E. F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989]). With this focus on critical editions and modern text criticism, it is no surprise that patristic text criticism is not included; they begin instead with Erasmus. J. H. Greenlee (*Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* [rev. ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995]) has chapters on "The Text in Print" (beginning in 1516) and "The Age of the Critical Text" (beginning with Westcott and Hort), but his discussion of the patristic period is part of his chapter on "The Transmission of the Text" and thus focuses on the MSS, not patristic scholarship applied to them. Likewise, L. Vaganay and C.-B. Amphoux (*An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* [trans. J. Heimerdinger; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991]) divide the discussion between "The History of the Written Text" and "The History and Future of the Printed Text" (beginning in 1514). They do give greater space and attention to patristic scholarship, but their focus remains on recensions and MSS, not on the practice of textual criticism as applied to individual variants.

[3] J. A. Kelhoffer, "The Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum* and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates concerning the Original Conclusion of Mark's Gospel," *ZNW* 92 (2001): 96. The Burgon quotation is from J. W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark* (Oxford: J. Parker, 1871), 49. See §55 on **Mark 16:9ff.**

> He combines a remarkable indifference to what are now regarded as important aspects of textual criticism with a quite uncritical method of dealing with them.[4]

M. Holmes, evaluating Metzger's statements, is more gracious in his judgment: "Origen's practice, so puzzling to us, reflects perfectly the ethos of his own time; he was a man of his own age."[5] The question remains, then, were the men of his age engaging in textual criticism? In order to answer this question, it is necessary first to look briefly at what constitutes "textual criticism" in the modern sense, and then to compare this to the textual analysis applied by the church fathers to the NT text. Answering this question then may lead to another: What is the value of patristic textual analysis for modern text criticism? In other words, can we learn anything of value from the practice of the church fathers?

1.1. Modern New Testament Textual Criticism

The modern discipline of NT textual criticism, as it has developed since the generation of Ximenes and Erasmus, has largely focused on one primary goal: to recreate the original text of the Greek NT in the form of a critical edition. Not all scholars have agreed on this goal or how to achieve it, but it still holds a primary position in the discipline.[6] Different tools such as theories of text types or statistical models have found

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[4] B. M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963), 93-94.

[5] M. W. Holmes, "Codex Bezae as a Recension of the Gospels," in *Codex Bezae: Studies from the Lunel Colloquium, June 1994* (ed. D. C. Parker and C.-B. Amphoux; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1996), 147.

[6] Greenlee states unequivocally that the purpose of textual criticism is "ascertaining the original text" (*Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 1). This same assumption is not stated in Aland and Aland's introduction, but clearly is the underlying foundation (cf. their first basic rule for textual criticism: "Only *one* reading can be original" [*Text of the New Testament*, 280]). Metzger and Ehrman state with greater nuance that the goal is the form of the text "most nearly conforming to the original" (*Text of the New Testament*, xv). On debate over this goal, see E. J. Epp, "The Multivalence of the Term 'Original Text' in New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 92 (1999): 245-81; idem, "Issues in New Testament

their popularity and criticisms. Compared to textual criticism of classical or other texts, the sheer volume of MSS and versions available for the NT has led the discipline away from using MS stemmas and conjectural emendations.[7] Recent decades have seen a growing interest in what might be considered a new branch within the discipline, focusing on the social history of the text.[8] But even for this, the primary work of textual critics is to create and refine critical editions of the NT, and to examine individual variants to determine which is the most likely to be original.

In order to make such determinations, a number of criteria are taken into consideration, based on the perception of textual relationships, scribal tendencies, authorial tendencies, and logic. These criteria are generally divided along the lines of external and internal evidence (as applied in Chap. 5 and summarized below). The assumptions about scribal tendencies in particular are grounded in the modern understanding of scribal practices (including lighting, dictation, corrections, etc.) and basic human limitations of hearing and eyesight or the mind's inclination to supply the familiar for the less familiar (whether in the reading one perceives, or in the reading one

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Textual Criticism: Moving from the Nineteenth Century to the Twenty-First Century," in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 17-76 (esp. 70-76).

[7] For example, the classic handbooks by P. Maas (*Textual Criticism* [trans. B. Flower; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958]) and L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson (*Scribes and Scholars* [2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1974], 186-213) both emphasize the importance of developing a stemma or family tree of relationships between MSS; on the other hand, M. L. West (*Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique Applicable to Greek and Latin Texts* [Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973]) tries to downplay the emphasis on stemmas by discussing the problem of open recensions (a point that Reynolds and Wilson also address). The latter may be closer to the situation in NT text criticism.

[8] For an overview, see Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 280-99 (this section is one of the major updates Ehrman has made to Metzger's 3rd edition); Epp, "Issues in New Testament Textual Criticism," 52-70.

is inclined to write).[9] The investigation of authorial tendencies takes into consideration a different set of human inclinations based on our modern understanding of the NT authors and the development of the NT writings. But, other than the fact that the goal is to reconstruct the author's own words, the author is generally not attributed with greater historical and literary accuracy, or with the likelihood to make fewer human errors than the copyists.

1.2. Explicit References to Variants and Textual Analysis

This simplistic description of textual criticism helps to provide a basic framework for evaluating how patristic textual analysis might compare. The criteria for evaluating variants were examined in Chapter 5 (regarding literary contexts) and will be summarized below. But the other major aspect of textual criticism remains largely unexplored here: namely, the creation of critical editions. The overview of textual analysis in Chapter 1 shows that ancient scholars did engage in comparing and correcting MSS, and thus in producing editions and versions of various texts. In order to fully address whether early Christians were involved in such a process with the NT writings would require a detailed examination of the NT MSS themselves, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, it is still worth touching on that issue in a limited fashion. One question in

[9] Hence, sections on "Paleography" (Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 8-22) or "The Making of Ancient Books" (Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 3-51) in text-critical introductions (cf. D. C. Parker's heavy emphasis on the MSS themselves in *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008]), and Greenlee's division of unintentional changes to the text as errors of sight, writing, hearing, memory, and judgment (*Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 55-58). For a history of scholarship on scribal tendencies in NT MSS, see J. R. Royse, "Scribal Tendencies in the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the* Status Quaestionis (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; SD 46; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 239-52. For a concise summary and bibliography for the conditions under which scribes worked, see Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden/Boston: Brill: 2008), 98-101 (cf. 32-37).

particular that is valid here is whether the same fathers who were commenting on the variants were also engaged in διόρθωσις on the NT text, and to what end.

1.2.1. Διόρθωσις and the Text of the New Testament

What the overview of textual analysis in Chapter 1 suggests is that there were two different trends in the editing of classical texts. True textual analysis, or διόρθωσις, as developed by the Alexandrians, was the province of scholars and done on an individual basis. Scholarly editions (ἐκδόσεις) were created for the express purpose of establishing the best text form to comment upon, so that it was only the first step in moving on to (in modern terminology) "higher criticism" (in ancient terminology, this included, in order: ἀνάγνωσις, ἐξήγησις, κρίσις [reading, interpretation, and criticism]). These editions were sometimes housed in libraries or personal collections for the use of subsequent scholars, but they were not published in the sense of being widely disseminated as authoritative texts. On the other side of the divide stood the emerging book trade, run by booksellers and the copyists they employed, whose interest in διόρθωσις was to correct a copy against its exemplar, but not (as the scholars did) to compare multiple copies and add critical sigla.

Thus, in terms of the Homeric texts, for example, the scribes and book trade proliferated the *koinē* (common, or "vulgar") texts, while the scholars worked to refine the *koinē* into a more critical version, but that version apparently was never widespread enough to significantly impact the transmission of the text. The edited copies that the scholars produced, then, since they were not intended to be authoritative for the general reading public, served especially as the foundation for further commentary (the part of

the process referred to as ἐξήγησις and κρίσις). The Alexandrians used the critical sigla in their editions as symbols and markers to correspond with their commentary and to link the text with the comments. For the scholars, editing was the necessary foundation for exegesis. For copyists, editing was the means of assuring that an exemplar was reproduced accurately, regardless of the quality of the text form itself.

The situation was not necessarily identical for the NT writings, but this is the milieu in which they were first composed and copied. It is likely the scenario in the period during which Irenaeus commented on the variant in **Rev 13:18**, which he said was due to a scribal error since such errors were common; this was also the period when Origen stated that there was great diversity among the MSS because of unreliable scribes, and the generation whose scribes Jerome later accused of being ignorant and unlearned in Scripture (see below). This is the same period that modern textual critics refer to as a time of textual divergence (Greenlee) or relative freedom (Vaganay and Amphoux).[10] What later manifested itself primarily in the Western text may have been an early *koinē* version of the NT collections,[11] the product of scribal but not necessarily scholarly work, while the efforts of scholars provided the basis for their commentaries and were in limited circulation among their own circles.

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[10] Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 52; Vaganay and Amphoux, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 89.

[11] Here, *koinē* refers simply to the common or popular text form, not the later Byzantine text. For theories about the 2nd-century text and Western readings in the Pauline epistles, see G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the* Corpus Paulinum (London: British Academy, 1953), 262, 265: he refers to the common text of the 2nd century as a textual reservoir (rather than a single text type) and deduces that many of the readings from this reservoir which were preserved primarily in the Western text were carefully edited out of the Alexandrian text (hence, the development two different text types from the same reservoir).

In terms of the Christian OT, the best evidence of patristic textual scholarship is Origen's Hexapla.[12] While such a massive work was intended as more than just a personal copy as a basis for commentary, its sheer size made it impossible to disseminate (in its entirety) as an authoritative edition, and the fundamental purpose of it remained the same as classical Alexandrian editions, to provide a version of the text with critical sigla as the basis for further work ("higher criticism"). The Alexandrian practice of using the sigla as a reference in the commentaries does not appear to have carried over into the use of the Hexapla, but the synoptic view of the various OT versions allowed subsequent commentators to freely refer to the readings of each translator, giving a narrative version of what was visually available in the Hexapla. Also, the testimony of Augustine shows that even by his day, establishing a text form was still seen as the responsibility of every scholar and as the foundation for exegesis.[13] Thus, as for the classical Alexandrian scholars, among the early Christians the comparison of MSS and readings was often seen merely as a means to an end, the end being proper exegesis and interpretation.

But not all textual editing was viewed positively, especially if it led to the wrong end. In a negative sense (or at least in a manner largely rejected by the church),

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[12] For bibliography and further discussion of an aspects of the Hexapla mentioned in this chapter, see Chapter 1, above.

[13] Augustine (*Doctr. chr.* 2.14 [21]) states that the first task of exegetes should be to "devote their careful attention and their skill [to] the correction of their copies, so that the uncorrected ones give way to the corrected ones" (nam codicibus emendandis primitus debet inuigilare solertia eorum, qui scripturas diuinas nosse desiderant, ut emendatis non emendati cedant ex uno dumtaxat interpretationis genere uenientes); E. Hill, trans., *Teaching Christianity: De Doctrina Christiana* (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996), 139. This work by Augustine stands out as a rare instance of a type of handbook for students, actually referring to the theory of textual studies, whereas most other evidence from the church fathers is from glimpses of the theory put into practice.

Theodotus and his followers[14] and Marcion[15] were engaged in textual revision. In the same way that Marcion's canon forced the church to consider the delineation of its own set of Christian writings, the radical textual revisions of Marcion or Theodotus may have encouraged other scholars to take a more conservative approach to their διόρθωσις, or may have prompted the kind of careful textual editing that gave rise to the Alexandrian text.[16] Likewise, these examples illustrate that anyone with a stylus and enough education was able to make their own "corrections" to the text.[17] But that did not necessarily mean that such editions became widely used beyond that individual's own circle or had a lasting effect on the textual stream in general.

The best witness to recognized textual recensions in antiquity with widespread influence is Jerome's statement that texts associated with Lucian, Hesychius, and Origen and Pamphilus were preferred in different regions. One issue is how comprehensive such

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[14] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*., 5.28.15. For discussion of Thedotus, see Chapter 1, above.

[15] Hence, A. von Harnack points out that Marcion believed he was not corrupting the text but removing the corruptions of previous scribes or editors (*Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God* [2nd ed.; trans. J. E. Steely and L. D. Bierma; Durham, NC: Labyrinth, 1990], 48-49). In contrast to Harnack and others, more recent scholars have argued that Marcion did not engage in widespread editing but rather largely preserved readings already available in his day (see G. Quispel, "Marcion and the Text of the New Testament," *Vigiliae Christianae* 52 [1998]: 349-60; cf. U. Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos: Rekonstruktion und historische Einordnung der marcionitischen Paulusbriefausgabe* [New York: de Gruyter, 1995]; and J. J. Clabeaux, *A Lost Edition of the Letters of Paul: A Reassessment of the Text of the Pauline Corpus Attested by Marcion* [CBQMS 21; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989]).

[16] Thus, B. Aland posits a greater text-consciousness arising late in the 2nd century in response to the textual license of those like Marcion ("Die Rezeption des neutestamentlichen Textes in den ersten Jahrhunderten," in *The New Testament in Early Christianity* [ed. J.-M. Sevrin; BETL 86; Leuven: Peeters, 1989], 5-21; cf. L. W. Hurtado, "The New Testament in the Second Century: Text, Collections and Canon," in *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical and Exegetical Studies* [ed. J. W. Childers and D. C. Parker; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006], 15). On careful editing in Alexandria, see the comments by G. Zuntz, below.

[17] 𝔓⁴⁶ is an example of this. Besides the original hand and first corrector (correcting against the copied exemplar), at least two other "correctors" participated later in the text's history, both of whom were likely readers who made their own emendations or notations in the process of using the papyrus (see Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri,* 213-24, 239-42). For more on 𝔓⁴⁶, see below.

works might have been, whether they included the entire canon of the Bible or only certain scriptural collections. Jerome repeats this testimony in his prefaces to both Chronicles and the Gospels, so he seems to suggest these names were attached to both OT and NT collections; or, for the NT, at least the names of Lucian and Hesychius were attached to the Gospels. Very little is known of these editions (or even the latter two scholars) besides Jerome's own testimony and any regional versions that can be identified in the two locations with which Jerome associates them (Antioch and Egypt, respectively). Lucian was a reputable scholar in Antioch in the 3rd century, but his name, rightly or wrongly, became associated with Arianism, which may be one reason why the Antiochians themselves do not refer to Lucian in relation to their preferred readings of the Scriptures.[18] The Hesychius mentioned by Jerome is even more obscure; he may be the Egyptian bishop referred to by Eusebius as martyred in Alexandria in 311, but beyond that, information about him is limited.[19] Thus, it is one thing to isolate Antiochene or Alexandrian text types, but taking it a step further and connecting these to the names of Lucian and Hesychius (which some scholars have attempted to do with varying degrees of success) is based predominantly, if not solely, on Jerome's testimony and goes beyond

[18] R. C. Hill, *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch* (Bible in Ancient Christianity 5; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005), 57. B. M. Metzger states, "Many are the historical and theological problems connected with the person and influence of Lucian of Antioch" ("The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible," in *Chapters in the History of New Testament Textual Criticism* [NTTS 4; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1963], 1).

[19] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 8.13. Cf. Vaganay and Amphoux, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 107-9.

the rest of the evidence.[20] It is therefore difficult to know exactly what work these two individuals may have engaged in on the NT text.

Of the versions listed by Jerome, the one name connected to the explicit references to variants is Origen. The question has been asked and answered more than once whether Origen ever created a recension of the NT. This is an especially important, and intriguing, question since Origen is the OT textual scholar par excellence; if anyone were to develop a critical edition of the NT, Origen seems the most likely candidate. However, by his own testimony, Origen did not engage in such a task, in part because the situation with the NT was significantly different from that with the OT.[21] He created the Hexapla because of variations with the original language, the inability of most Christians to compare the Greek OT to the Hebrew themselves, and the apologetic need to understand on what text Jews were basing their theological arguments.

With the NT, Origen was dealing not only with the original language but also with a diversity of largely unreliable MSS. Thus, he recognized the need to develop a critical edition of the NT text, but did not attempt one himself. The studies of modern scholars such as G. Zuntz and G. Fee have corroborated Origen's testimony on the

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[20] E.g., Metzger, "Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible," 1-41; F. G. Kenyon, "Hesychius and the Text of the New Testament," *Mémorial Lagrange* (ed. L.-H. Vincent; Paris: J. Gabalda & Cie., 1940), 245-50. Yet, Metzger notes that the "Hesychian" text actually predates Hesychius ("Patristic Evidence and the Textual Criticism of the New Testament," *NTS* 18 [1972]: 385 n. 3), and B. Aland and K. Wachtel backtrack from the previous stance of Aland and Aland (*Text of the New Testament*, 64-66) to state that "one simply cannot determine if and to what extent Lucian was involved in producing a recension of the NT" ("The Greek Minuscule Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the* Status Quaestionis [SD 46; ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 45 n. 6). See also the summary of scholarship on these text types by J. N. Birdsall, "The Recent History of New Testament Textual Criticism (from Westcott and Hort, 1881, to the Present)," *ANRW* II.26.1: 144, 148, 173.

[21] Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14, Latin text; cf. Cf. Metzger, "Explicit References," 80.

matter.[22] Thus, according to the classical schema presented above, any copies of NT books that Origen "corrected" (as a διορθωτής) were likely personal editions, or collections of his own notes for the purpose of (and exemplified by) his scriptural commentaries. These copies may have been housed in the library of Caesarea and thus accessible to later scholars, but they were never intended to be spread as an authoritative version of the NT.[23] If they were ever disseminated in any form, it is likely due to the efforts of his Caesarean successors Pamphilus and Eusebius, the same individuals who were likely responsible for the dissemination of his "edition" of the LXX (the LXX column of the Hexapla with his critical signs).

The MSS provide some interesting evidence for what lasting impact Origen's copies housed at the library of Caesarea may have had. There are a number of colophons from later biblical MSS that faithfully reproduce Pamphilus's own colophons or testify that they were copied or corrected against copies from Pamphilus's library. For example, colophons from OT books in Codex Sinaiticus state that these books were copied from

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[22] Zuntz (*Text of the Epistles*, 214-15, 251-52, 271-73) determines that the Alexandrian text type (not an edition) was due to "unknown early critics" rather than Origen. G. D. Fee ("P^{75}, P^{66}, and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria," in *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* [ed. R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney; Grand Rapids, MA: Zondervan, 1974], 44) concludes that there was no "scholarly recension of the NT text in Alexandria either in the fourth century *or* the second century, either as a created or a carefully edited text" and that Origen "showed no concern for such a recension."

[23] Vaganay and Amphoux assert that Jerome made use of and refers to such copies when he mentions "exemplaria Adamantii" (*Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, 114). This is very well possible, and Jerome likely consulted copies of Origen's secondary works in the library of Caesarea. However, the two examples that Vaganay and Amphoux cite (p. 104) are **Matt 24:36** (§39) and **Gal 3:1** (§140), from Jerome's commentaries on Matthew and Galatians. Jerome is admittedly dependent on the commentaries of Origen for both of these works. Rather than going one step further and also checking the copies of Matthew and Galatians that Origen was working from, more likely all Jerome is referencing in both cases is either Origen's lemma in his commentary or a notation by Origen about a variant in certain copies (especially considering the fact that Jerome admits he composed his *Commentary on Matthew* in great haste over a period of just two weeks and states that he did not even have time to consult other commentaries—besides Origen's, that is; cf. the prologue to *Comm. Matt.*). In these two instances, at least, and perhaps in others, it is thus more likely that "exemplaria Adamantii" refers to the evidence from Origen's commentaries, not biblical MSS that he personally corrected (at least for the NT).

and corrected against Origen's Hexapla.[24] While colophons for NT books refer back to Pamphilus or copies from his library, it is the dearth of such references to the copies of Origen that speaks against their widespread influence.[25] Another piece of interesting evidence comes from the NT MS 1739 (a copy of Acts and the Pauline and catholic epistles), copied from an early MS that likely comes from this scribal school in Caesarea, not long after the time of Pamphilus. Zuntz describes the scribe of 1739's exemplar as "not a copyist, but a scholar commanding a refined critical method and animated by a truly philological interest."[26] This exemplar was full of a number of intriguing marginal notes, preserved in 1739, but of particular interest here is the MS's connection to Origen's *Commentary on Romans*.

The exemplar of 1739 reproduced Origen's text of Romans where possible, culled from his commentary. Elsewhere (where the copy of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* was wanting, and through the rest of the Pauline epistles) the exemplar reproduced a "very ancient manuscript" (ἀπὸ ἀντιγράφου παλαιοτάτου, referred to throughout the marginal notes as τὸ παλαιόν) collated against Origen's works, with agreements and

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[24] The colophons for 2 Esdras and Esther are translated by A. Grafton and M. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 185; the Greek text is provided in the notes (p. 340; see also the colophons from the Syro-Hexapla on pp. 340-42). Cf. Gamble, 158. The colophons for Sinaiticus, along with the entire MS, are now easily accessible to the general public through the digital facsimile at http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net.

[25] For example, see the colophon for Jude reproduced by Euthalius (PG 85:692; cf. Appendix A, below). I have not made an exhaustive study of colophons in order to state definitively that no NT colophons refer to the copies of Origen, but my impression from the secondary literature is that such colophons are rare or nonexistent.

[26] Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 72-73. Unfortunately, the original beginning and end to 1739 are lacking, so any colophon including the scholar's name has been lost. While the attribution to Eusebius is problematic because of a couple of marginal notes, Zuntz determines that it was at least someone in the "Eusebian tradition," working in Caesarea no later than 400 CE (p. 73). Zuntz also compares 1739 to the Alexandrian textual stream and characterizes the "very ancient manuscript" behind it as a brother (but not a twin) to 𝔓[46] (pp. 78-83).

disagreements noted in the margin (i.e., a textual apparatus).[27] Thus, the text of Origen is held in the highest esteem, regarded to be of the greatest authority; the next best thing is a "very ancient manuscript." Described in terms of external evidence, the text of a learned scholar was given the greatest weight, with a manuscript of considerable antiquity coming in a close second.[28] Along with this, it is apparently assumed that the text Origen used for his commentary on Romans was of high quality, suggesting that Origen either chose the best copy available to him or corrected the text and used that as a basis for his commentary.[29] Taken together, these facts may provide evidence about Origen's own copy of Romans: since the text that appears in 1739 is reconstructed from Origen's commentary, if Origen left behind an edited copy of Romans that was once housed in Caesarea, it was not available to the scholar who compiled this text. Likewise, the remainder of the MS is not copied from Origen's texts but collated against his other,

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[27] For the collation and transcription of 1739, see K. Lake, J. de Zwaan, and M. S. Enslin, "Codex 1739," in *Six Collations of New Testament Manuscripts* [ed. K. Lake and S. New; Harvard Theological Studies 17; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932], 141-219, esp. 199-219. While 1739 preserves an early example of such marginal notes, it is certainly not the only MS with such an apparatus. Some further examples are preserved in anonymous scholia (see Appendix A, below).

[28] Aside from the Pauline epistles, another interesting example comes in the margin of 1 John 4:3: the rare reading λύει (for μὴ ὁμολογεῖ) is noted as being found in Irenaeus, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria, again showing the weight this scholar placed on the patristic evidence (Lake et al., "Codex 1739," 198; cf. the apparatus for 1 John 4:3 in NA^{27}). (Socrates also discusses this variant in his church history [see §184].) Scholia, such as of the Holy Basil at Rom 7:4, also appear in 1739. Given the gap between the Caesarean scholar in the 3rd cent. and the copy made by the scribe Ephraim (i.e., 1739) in the 10th cent., it is impossible to determine that all such marginal comments are original to the Caesarean scholar. However, Lake et al. comment that the references cite no one later than Basil, and that while the marginal notes for Acts and the catholic epistles are more limited than for the Pauline epistles and "not so markedly taken from Origen," "they are of the same general nature and seem to indicate that the same mind selected them" ("Codex 1739," 144).

[29] In terms of text-critical practice, another interesting feature of the original Vorlage of 1739 is that it does not create an eclectic text (with the exception of extended portions of Romans, where Origen's text was not available) but prefers to consistently copy one source (i.e., a diplomatic text) and then note the differences in the margin using a system of marks in the text.

secondary works, suggesting again that any copies of these NT writings that Origen may have edited for himself and left behind in Caesarea were no longer available.

Thus, Origen's own testimony states that he did not produce an edition of the NT comparable to the Hexapla, and the evidence from MSS copied by his Caesarean successors likewise suggests that he did not leave behind personal edited copies of the NT books that were then disseminated in the form of a critical edition. While scholars like Zuntz and Fee have addressed this issue and agree that Origen did not produce a recension of the NT, where they do not necessarily agree is in the next logical question, whether anyone besides Origen developed such an edition or recension. The answer partly depends on how one defines these terms or the result of such work. Zuntz, for example, finds evidence, based on an examination of 𝔓^{46}, that there were scholarly efforts in the 2nd century to correct and "purify" the NT text (particularly around Alexandria), but that such corrected MSS "must have been rare at the time: otherwise we ought to find evidence of their use by the earliest Fathers."[30]

There is one father we know of, however, who did attempt to purify the text: Jerome. He was critical of the work of both scribes and translators and the resultant quality of the Latin Scriptures.[31] When Pope Damasus asked Jerome to produce a revised copy of the Scriptures for the Latin-speaking church, Jerome at first began to do merely that, to revise the Latin against the Greek (both Old and New Testament). However, the further he got into the project, the more problems he found in the copies with which he worked. In the end, this led him to forego simple revision in order to create a completely

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[30] Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 251.

[31] See especially Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*. For more on Jerome's translation of the OT, see Chapter 1, above.

new translation. But it was the OT that consumed most of his time and energy, as he endeavored to translate directly from the Hebrew. To what degree Jerome also translated the NT afresh, or even completed a revision beyond his initial foray with the Gospels, is an unresolved issue.[32] Thus, like Origen before him, Jerome as an editor (and translator) was primarily an OT textual analyst. His work on the NT was more limited and attracted less attention. Nevertheless, what also surfaces in the work of both Origen and Jerome is the continued emphasis on the inadequacy of the copies of the NT available to them.

1.2.2. Textual Transmission: Scribes and Scholars

One common thread beginning with Alexandrian textual analysis that has lasting effects down through the time of Jerome is the divide between scribes and scholars.[33] The line between the two categories may have become blurred by the 4th century when reputable Christian scriptoria began to emerge, but even into that period the church fathers—the scholars—did not always hold the work of scribes (particularly the early scribes) in the highest regard. The quality of a manuscript was often evaluated by its accuracy in particular readings ("the accurate copies"), and underlying the very principle of διόρθωσις was the fact that it was only necessary because of the changes brought into

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[32] For example, see C. Tkacz, "*Labor tam utilis*: The Creation of the Vulgate," *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996): 44, and the summary of arguments in B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 356-59.

[33] Note that during the time of the great Alexandrian librarians, this is a Greek division, not a Jewish one. Certainly by the time of Jesus, the Jewish scribes *were* the scholars. However, moving into the rabbinic period, when such great emphasis was placed on oral tradition, the same divide did begin to appear in Jewish scholarship. The age of scribal freedom with the text had passed; the role of scribes and copyists instead was a conservative one, to reproduce every jot and tittle from exemplar to copy with unerring accuracy—hence, the transition from *sopherim* to Masoretes (cf. M. J. Mulder, "The Transmission of the Biblical Text," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* [ed. M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling; Assen: Van Gorcum/ Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988], 106-8). The rabbis, in their creative exegesis, were the ones granted the scholarly freedom to adapt the text. See further the discussion in Chapter 1.

the text by the work of scribes. This is then one more significant area where the explicit references to variants offer testimony, because of the number of variants attributed to scribes and the reasons why.

When Origen and Jerome in particular comment on the diversity of NT MSS, both highlight the role that scribes play in these variations. Discussing differences among the copies of the Gospels (§32), Origen states: "But it is a recognized fact that there is much diversity in our copies, whether by the carelessness of certain scribes, or by some culpable rashness in the correction of the text, or by some people making arbitrary additions or omissions in their corrections."[34] In other words, the unreliability of the copies is due to negligent copying, or the lack of proper correction (διόρθωσις). While Jerome spreads the responsibility for variations to the translators as well, he likewise comments on the need to correct "the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics" and those things "inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake."[35]

When the fathers attribute variants to either intentional or unintentional scribal errors (see Chap. 5 under "Transcriptional Probabilities"), a familiar theme in many of their comments is describing copyists as being in some way unlearned, ignorant, or incompetent. Epiphanius (§1) uses at least two different terms to refer to the ignorance of the scribes (ἀμαθῶν, ἀγνοίᾳ). His accusation is that they attempted to correct (κατὰ διόρθωσιν) the text by removing what they assumed to be a duplication in **Matt 1:11**,

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[34] νυνὶ δὲ δῆλον ὅτι πολλὴ γέγονεν ἡ τῶν ἀντιγράφων διαφορά, εἴτε ἀπὸ ῥᾳθυμίας τινῶν γραφέων, εἴτε ἀπὸ τόλμης τινῶν μοχθηρᾶς <εἴτε ἀπὸ ἀμελούντων> τῆς διορθώσεως τῶν γραφομένων, εἴτε καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν τὰ ἑαυτοῖς δοκοῦντα ἐν τῇ διορθώσει <ἢ> προστιθέντων ἢ ἀφαιρούντων (*Comm. Matt.* 15.14; GCS, Or 10:387-88). Translated by R. B. Tollinton (*Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen* [London: SPCK, 1929], 109-10).

[35] Jerome, *Preface to the Four Gospels*; NPNF 2.6:488 (uel a praesumptoribus inperitis emendata peruersius uel a librariis dormitantibus aut addita sunt aut mutata [*Biblia Sacra Vulgata* (ed. R. Weber et al.; 4th ed.; Stuttgart: Germany Bible Society, 1994), 1515 *ll.* 14-16]).

but they did so without paying attention to the number fourteen given as the sum of the genealogical list.[36] Isidore (§181) likewise refers to unlearned persons (ἀμαθῶν) making the change to the text of **Heb 9:17**, which was merely a single stroke changing one letter to another (and thus was not necessarily intentional, as Epiphanius charges, but was simply due to a certain amount of carelessness).

Both Origen and Jerome offer some further insight into what they perceive as the ignorance of scribes, which generally relates to a lack of knowledge of either Hebrew or the OT. In his discussion of **Matt 13:35** (§27), Jerome, like Epiphanius, also uses multiple terms to depict the ignorance or inexperience of the earliest copyists of the NT (ignorantes, nescientes, inperitis).[37] Since his charge is that they were unfamiliar with the name Asaph, his implication seems to be that the earliest Christians, as Gentiles, did not know the Hebrew Scriptures well enough to recognize the more obscure name. Similarly, in **Rom 4:3** (§102), Origen speculates that when quoting Gen 15:6, Paul originally wrote the name Abram rather than Abraham, thus quoting Genesis correctly; it was later scribes (Gentiles unlearned in the accuracy of Scripture [τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν μὴ ἐπιστήσαντας τῇ ἀκριβείᾳ τῆς γραφῆς]), who did not know Genesis well enough to understand the distinction between the names, who "corrected" Abram to

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[36] Epiphanius seems to see "correction" (διόρθωσις) in a negative light; he refers to those copies in which **Luke 22:43-44** (§73) is (rightly) not removed as "unrevised" (ἀδιορθώτοις). Thus, feeble attempts at correcting the text often yield corruption instead. He also seems to warn off "eager students" of the text from trying to correct **John 19:14** (§93) but encourages them rather to yield to the greater authority of Clement, Origen, and Eusebius, who have already restored the accuracy (ἠκρίβωσαν) of the text.

[37] Jerome adds one more term to this list, "indoctis," in his discussion of **Eph 2:4** (§147). This a particularly interesting example because Jerome is here translating Origen, but where Origen uses a passive construction to refer to what has been falsely added to the text (παρεμβεβλῆσθαι μάτην), Jerome turns this into an active construction referring to ignorant scribes (ab indoctis scriptoribus additam).

Abraham.[38] Likewise, where **Matt 21:9** (§34) appears to misquote Psalm 118, Origen assumes that the mistake is the fault of scribes who did not know Hebrew (copyists either of the psalm or of its quotation in Matthew). There is an expectation, then, that copyists of the NT should be skilled in more than simply the language of the text they are reproducing; they should also have a working knowledge of the Scriptures in general, and perhaps of some proper names, including geography.[39] A scribe unfamiliar with some things who attempts to "correct" the text may instead introduce a new variant; as Jerome puts it, in correcting an error, the scribe creates an error (ut dum errorem emendaret, fecit errorem; §27).

Eusebius describes how this process of initiating and perpetuating mistakes happens. Like Jerome's description of the change at Matt 13:35, he also puts an emphasis on early copyists of the Gospels. Addressing a possible discrepancy between the resurrection appearances in Matthew and John (§56), Eusebius explains that it is not uncommon for perceived contradictions between the Gospels to be the result of a scribal error; for it often happens "that the dictation is given correctly at the beginning, but because of a change made subsequently in error by those who did not completely understand, a difficulty then arose" (ὀρθῶς κατὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑπηγόρευτο, κατὰ σφάλμα δὲ τῶν μετὰ ταῦτα μὴ ἀκριβούντων τὴν μεταβολὴν, συμβέβηκέ τινα ζητεῖσθαι). In other words, through misunderstanding (or ignorance), an error was

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[38] This critique of the scribes is blatant in the Greek fragment of Origen's commentary on this verse. In the Latin translation, Rufinus appears to address the fact that Origen is conjecturing an emendation rather than explaining an actual variant: the Latin says that while some may see an error here, this is mere speculation, and so offers an explanation for how Paul may have written Abraham instead of Abram intentionally without actually being in error.

[39] See especially Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40-41(24) [204-216], where he addresses discrepancies in several place names and proper names, both in the Gospels (**John 1:28** [§80]; **Matt 8:28** [§21]) and in the OT.

introduced early in the tradition, and it has become so widely copied since then that it is known as the majority (or only) reading. This assumption is why scholars like Eusebius and Origen feel free to conjecture an emendation or scribal error even where there is no variant extant (either then or now).[40]

One reason that the fathers trusted authors over scribes and trusted the original version of the text to be more correct than subsequent copies is that the fathers themselves were authors, and copies of their own texts were being made. They voiced concerns about how their own words were being transmitted correctly or could potentially be altered by the copyists. For example, Eusebius preserves a postscript by Irenaeus that instructs potential copyists: "If, dear reader, you should transcribe this little book, I adjure you . . . to compare your transcript and correct it carefully by this copy [κατορθώσῃς αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸ ἀντίγραφον τοῦτο], from which you have made your transcript. This adjuration likewise you must transcribe and include in your copy."[41] Jerome also comments on variations within copies of his own writings. In a cover letter to Lucinius (*Ep.* 71), who has sent scribes to copy for him some of Jerome's works, Jerome forewarns: "If then you find errors or omissions which interfere with the sense, these you must impute not to me but to your own servants; they are due to the ignorance or carelessness of the copyists, who write down not what they find but what they take to be the meaning, and do but expose their own mistakes when they try to correct those of

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[40] Besides the example here from Eusebius, see also Origen, **Matt 5:45** (§14); **Matt 19:19** (§32; this is the occasion for his description of scribal tendencies, discussed above); **Eph 2:4** (§147).

[41] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.20.2; *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (trans. G. A. Williamson; 1965; repr. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1995), 227.

others."[42] These are but two examples of such cautions that were not uncommon in antiquity.[43]

As noted above, the 2nd century in particular is often acknowledged as a time of relative freedom for the NT text, the period during which the majority of textual variants were introduced.[44] Thus, any accusations by Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, or Jerome pertaining to the earliest generation of copyists fit well with modern theories about that early period. But the criticisms of Origen, and especially Jerome, carry that distrust into the 3rd, 4th, and even 5th centuries. Does the evidence of the MSS and other testimony support the opinion of the fathers about the limited skill and knowledge of scribes? Or does their opinion reveal an unfounded prejudice, possibly a social one based on class and education? A number of factors may be considered here briefly: scribal hands, scribal tendencies, MS quality, the evidence for Christian scriptoria, and the education and social setting of scribes. Several of these issues may be grouped together as what evidence may be gleaned from examining the MSS themselves.

The style of scribal hands found in many NT MSS from before the 4th century is described as "reformed documentary," or an intermediate step between documentary and fine bookhand. Such texts do show a care in copying, but the script is not a literary hand

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[42] Jerome, *Ep.* 71.5; NPNF 2.6:153 (unde, si paragrammata reppereris uel minus aliqua descripta sunt, quae sensum legentis inpediant, non mihi debes inputare, sed tuis et inperitiae notariorum librariorumque incuriae, qui scribunt non, quod inueniunt, sed, quod intellegunt, et, dum alienos errores emendare nituntur, ostendunt suos [CSEL 55:5-6]).

[43] H. Y. Gamble cites Strabo in this regard and says that "The complaints voiced by many ancient writers about the quality of commercial copies were consistent and continuous" (*Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995], 93). This statement relates to commercial copyists, employed by booksellers, distinct from private copyists, who generally produced texts of greater accuracy and skill. However, the copyists that Jerome writes to Lucinius about fall in the latter category.

[44] E.g., Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 74.

and may thus reflect a background or training not focused on the production of literary texts.[45] However, the testimony that Origen had working for him, along with his transcriptionists and copyists, young women skilled in calligraphy suggests that at least by the early 3rd century, there were copyists of Christian texts who had some training in a fine quality hand.[46] There is a question, though, how common Origen's situation was (in his case, a scholar supported by a wealthy patron), and there is even less evidence to suggest any formal Christian scriptoria were in existence, at least prior to the 4th century.[47] However, during the same early period marked by the relative freedom of the text, some common traits arose among Christian MSS, most notably the unique phenomenon of the nomina sacra, implying at least a common scribal network or culture.[48] Also, some of the early papyri bear evidence of corrections, suggesting a

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[45] Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 71. On the description of hands in early Christian literature, see especially the studies by E. G. Turner (*Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World* [2nd ed. rev. and enl.; ed. P. J. Parsons; London: University of London, Institute of Classical Studies, 1987], 1-23) and C. H. Roberts (*Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* [Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1977; London: Oxford University Press, 1979], 14-23).

[46] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.23. On this text, see especially K. Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 41-43 and passim. Cf. Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 121.

[47] Haines-Eitzen (*Guardians of Letters*, 83-91) prefaces her argument clearly with the heading: "The Myth of Christian Scriptoria in the Second and Third Centuries," although she nuances this by stating that she is not arguing against any scriptoria during this period, just for the absence of evidence for such scriptoria (84). See also Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 121-23, who points to the possibility of scriptoria developing by the early 4th century, before the monastic scriptoria arose during the 4th and 5th centuries.

[48] Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 74-78; Gamble determines that the occurrence of nomina sacra "is a clear indication that the transcription of early Christian books was not farmed out to the professional book trade but was done in-house by Christians themselves" (78). See also L. W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), who discusses a number of physical qualities among the early Christian MSS, including nomina sacra, the staurogram, and preference for the codex over the roll. As for common traits within the text itself, E. J. Epp proposes these commonalities reveal "textual clusters," or the forerunner to text types ("The Significance of the Papyri for Determining the Nature of the New Testament Text in the Second Century: A Dynamic View of Textual Transmission," in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins Recensions, Text, and Transmission* [ed. W. L. Petersen; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989], 71-103).

degree of oversight of copying and concern for quality and accuracy.[49] Whatever conclusions may be drawn about the scribes and MSS of the first few centuries, they are specific to MSS and individual situations rather than universal. Only later in Christian history did scribal practices become much more controlled and systematized as copying became the province of ascetics and monasteries.

As for the social condition of scribes and their education, in the ancient world—both preceding and during the first few Christian centuries—Greek and Roman copyists were typically either slaves or freedpersons. They were more commonly men, but also included women. Large households would have a number of slaves trained in writing to take care of legal documents, letters, and copies of literature. Booksellers also employed copyists (typically freedpersons) to reproduce literature, often on demand (rather than keeping a standing supply of books on hand). Libraries also required the work of persons trained in writing, either employed by the library or at times perhaps the librarians themselves, in order to maintain and increase the collection. The distinction among Origen's staff between transcriptionists (those who took down shorthand notes while the author dictated), copyists (those who produced readable copies of a work), and calligraphers (whose work is slightly more obscure) may suggest that each group consisted of specialists in that area, but there is evidence as well that scribes were multifunctional, a necessary skill for a freedperson to earn a living. Copies of a writing could also be made simply by interested readers with enough education to read and write,

[49] Royse summarizes the corrections from a handful of the early papyri (*Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*, 77-78). Apart from 𝔓[46], the corrections are generally by the original scribe. Some of the corrections by the original hand (especially in 𝔓[66]) show evidence of collation against a second exemplar. 𝔓[46] has corrections by three other hands, suggesting an official corrector (whom Royse terms a διορθωτής), as well as two later readers who added their own corrections. On corrections, scribal conventions, and care in copying, see also Hurtado, "New Testament in the Second Century," 9-15.

but these were intended as personal copies (and thus their legibility and accuracy only need suit the individual reader). While there were administrative positions with the title "scribe" (*scriba* in Latin, or γραμματέυς in Greek), their skills pertained to documentary and legal texts, and thus are set apart from the issue of reproducing literary texts.[50]

When Christian literature came on the scene, it was also copied in this literary milieu.[51] Wealthy Christians may have tasked their own slaves (who may or may not have been Christians or had any training in the Scriptures) with making copies of Christian writings. Christian freedpersons may have copied out Gospels or letters for their own personal use or for Christian communities. Some Christian works appeared among the offerings of booksellers. Emerging Christian libraries, both private and public, needed to hire or regularly employ scribes to increase the collection. Scholars like Origen, who had wealthy backing, employed a number of copyists to reproduce their own writings, and these scribes may have made copies of scriptural writings for them as well. But in the earliest generations, the question of who copied the texts may be linked to the assessment of what percentage of Christians, or churches, were wealthy (and thus had slaves they could task with copying Christian literature, or could afford to order or purchase books). Eventually, copying out the Scriptures and other writings became an act of piety and humility and was taken on by ascetics.

As for education, training in writing meant the copyist had some amount of education, although they were trained in "letters," not necessarily literature. In other words, fluency in writing did not automatically mean an equal fluency in reading, or in

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[50] On scribes in general, see Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 21-35. On female scribes, see ibid., 41-52.

[51] Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 35-40.

understanding and interpreting literature—the education that scholars received. For the earliest scribes of Christian literature, some of whom may not have been Christian, it also did not necessarily mean a training in Scripture. On the other hand, some professional copyists were highly educated. Epiphanius tells the story of an Egyptian copyist who knew medicine, the sciences, and exegesis, as well as both the Greek and Egyptian languages; he was also a Christian (but later fell into heresy) who memorized the Old and New Testaments.[52] The early papyri bear mixed results about the level of scriptural knowledge by scribes. On the one hand, the most common form of mistake (or singular reading) in these early texts is in the spelling of names and places; while this may simply be a matter of unregulated orthography, it may also suggest unfamiliarity with these proper nouns. On the other hand, there are examples of harmonization to other scriptural passages, such as Synoptic parallels, indicating a knowledge of other Christian literature (or a familiarity with their use in liturgy or lections).[53]

One other witness to the relationship between the work of scribes and scholars may be in the layers of activity excavated within some of the early MSS. For example, in $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$, M. Holmes proposes there may be what remains of early marginal comments (and thus commentary) on the text of Romans.[54] $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ itself includes these readings within the text of Romans, so it is only speculative that the readings were brought into the text from

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[52] Epiphanius, *Pan.* 67.1.1-4; 67.7.9; for a translation and discussion, see Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 39. On the education of scribes, both pagan and Christian, see ibid., 53-75.

[53] These are part of the results of P. M. Head's study of fourteen early papyri ("Observations on Early Papyri of the Synoptic Gospels, especially on the 'Scribal Habits,'" *Biblica* 71 [1990]: 246) in confirmation of Royse's conclusions (from his 1981 dissertation, recently updated and published as *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*).

[54] M. W. Holmes, "The Text of $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$: Evidence of the Earliest 'Commentary' on Romans?" in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World* (ed. T. J. Kraus and T. Nicklas; Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 2; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 189-206.

the margins of the exemplar. This testifies to the activity of two different people: the reader (or scribe) who added the comments in the margin, and the copyist who placed them in the text. In the case of the first individual, this may simply be a reader, not a copyist (hence, a scholar of some caliber); but, if the same hand recorded both corrections and comments (thus, the copyist of the exemplar was also the commentator), this may be one reason why the copyist of 𝔓46 considered both types of marginal notes to be of the same kind.

The second individual in question here, then, is this copyist of 𝔓46 who either did not know Romans well enough, or did not understand the subtleties of correction and marginal commentary well enough, to distinguish correction from commentary. The hand of 𝔓46 is a professional, a fact reinforced by the corrections by a contemporary second hand, but the character of the copying is poor and full of blunders.[55] Yet, this papyrus represents a very good text type, received from the same exemplar or lineage that produced the marginal comments. It is because of this high quality text type that Zuntz uses 𝔓46 as part of his evidence to postulate editing activity in Alexandria by anonymous philologists.[56] Thus, the papyrus offers a mixture of data: a scribe who could rightly be called either ignorant or careless, yet who worked in a professional capacity, and who had access to a high quality exemplar that bears signs of scholarly activity.

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[55] Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 212-13. Cf. Royse (*Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*, 199-358), who summarizes: "The scribe makes a number of errors that result in nonsense, despite frequent correction by him of his text. Many of these seem to arise from his faulty understanding of what he is copying, resulting in a high density of nonsense in context readings" (358).

[56] Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 251-52, 262, 272-73. He also postulates a Christian scriptorium in Alexandria in the latter half of the 2nd century, but this seems to be based on the assumption that the careful philological editing would take place in that environment. In some ways (relating to the knowledge of the scribe), 𝔓46 seems to be evidence of just the opposite.

By the time of Pamphilus, the distinction between scribes and scholars had blurred, or was in the process of changing. Pamphilus was both a scribe and a scholar. While he did not engage in the extensive textual scholarship or commentaries that Origen did, Pamphilus was a great admirer (and defender) of Origen, likewise trained in Alexandria. Where Pamphilus left his mark is in the colophons of the many texts that he copied or corrected. Pamphilus was a librarian, and in that sense he and his trained Christian scribes fulfilled the primary purpose of a librarian in that day, to obtain (or create) copies of the literature being collected in the library, or copies that were requested of works housed in the library. Eusebius, the scholar, was trained as a scribe in Pamphilus's textual practices, and later as bishop and friend of Constantine, Eusebius had access to a large and skilled enough group of scribes that the emperor could request from him fifty copies of the Gospels.[57]

To return to the question of whether the church fathers were accurate in their assessment of scribes, while it is clear that not all people who copied out literature, and therefore Scripture, were by any means untrained or ignorant, there were also limited controls over copying of Scripture in the early centuries. The criticism that Jerome levels at scribes is similar to Augustine's criticism of the proliferation of Latin translations: anybody who had enough ability and desire made their own.[58] In terms of scriptural MSS, the majority of these personal copies would likely have remained such and may have had minimal influence on the transmission of the text, except for two factors: (1) in

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[57] On the scribal and scholarly work of Pamphilus and Eusebius, see especially Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, 133-232.

[58] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.11 (16): "Those who translated the scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted; this is certainly not true of Latin translators. The fact is that whenever in the early days of the faith a Greek codex came into anybody's hands, and he felt that he had the slightest familiarity with each language, he rushed in with a translation" (Hill, *Teaching Christianity*, 136).

those early centuries, literature was often reproduced by borrowing and copying a MS from a friend rather than purchasing one from a bookseller; (2) the accidents of history have preserved a variety of MSS, so that some, or many, of the early papyri cited in the modern critical editions may represent such personal copies.

The bottom line is that a great number of people were engaged in copying the Scriptures, in a number of situations, and the criticisms leveled by the early Christian scholars may have been based simply on the principle of the unknown—they did not know who these copyists were or what training they had. It is also not unreasonable to think that Origen's or Jerome's assessments that the early copyists were lacking knowledge of Hebrew or the OT may have been right on the mark; the scribe of 𝔓^{46}, along with the orthographical variations among the names in early papyri, may be a witness to the scriptural illiteracy of some. It is true that those trained as scribes were generally less educated than those trained to be writers or commentators, and that even the more educated individuals who made personal copies did so under circumstances with little or no quality control. But the knee-jerk reaction that all errors or discrepancies were the fault of ignorant copyists may have been a prejudice that arose or persisted, based on either a scholarly or a social elitism, that did not always give fair consideration to the textual evidence. Augustine stands alone in this respect, willing to attribute a discrepancy to Matthew himself rather than to a copyist.

1.2.3. Summary

It cannot be determined here decisively what recensional activity may have taken place on the NT, where, when, and by whom. However, it is sufficient to note that on a

small scale, textual revision was constantly occurring anywhere there was a text and a scholar, or scribe, who felt inclined to correct it. For the Greek NT, at least through the first four or five centuries C.E., there does not appear to be one, authoritative recension undertaken by a scholar of the caliber of Origen. There were certainly regional versions that had emerged, but we unfortunately have limited testimony about how this happened. The clearest example from this early period of what would become an intentionally authoritative text by a known scholar was Jerome's Vulgate. But even in this case, the majority of Jerome's efforts were expended on the OT, and it is debated how much of the Vulgate NT Jerome was actually responsible for.

Instead, what the evidence *can* tell us is that individual church fathers corrected or collated their own copies of Scripture as a basis for their exegesis. As scholars, they believed this was necessary predominantly because of the unreliable work of scribes. While some evidence does bear out this truth, that the earliest Christian scribes may not have been the highest quality professionals or the most educated, certainly not all scribes were so careless in their work. The lines between scribes and scholars also blurred at times, especially when the scholars undertook to copy works for their own use. While making the copy, they may also have felt sufficient liberty to correct the text, not simply against the exemplar but against what they understood to be the best or most accurate reading (i.e., they engaged in textual analysis). By the time these MSS have reached us, either as preserved papyri or as layers within a later MS, there is no longer a distinction between the scribes and scholars who worked on the text, or between the commentators who added their opinions in the margins and the copyists who wrote those comments into the text. But whatever notations the readers or copyists may have made, the primary goal

of the scholars was not the text form itself but to move beyond the letter of the text to its meaning. Textual analysis was the foundation for commentary, and the fruit of this labor is preserved in the explicit references to variants in the exegetical works of the church fathers.

On the other hand, while Augustine asserts that it is the responsibility of the exegete to compare and verify the copies in order to establish the best text, his concession that those who only knew Latin were limited to the Latin texts and could not consult the Greek also illustrates that not everyone who wished to interpret the text had every skill required to do so thoroughly.[59] It was thus necessary at times to depend on previous scholarship rather than to do the complete work from scratch. This is a trend seen first in the classical Alexandrian scholars, where Zenodotus and Aristarchus in particular pioneered textual analysis but scholars who came after them largely depended on preceding work rather than being pioneers themselves. The same pattern may be seen with Origen and the scholars who followed him. Origen alone produced a comprehensive edition of the OT; subsequent OT scholarship referred back to this work rather than attempting the same task.

Likewise with commentaries: by the time of Ambrose and Jerome exegetes were heavily dependent on the commentaries of earlier scholars. So, while Augustine would advise them to compare the biblical MSS for themselves, it is possible that they instead spent their time comparing commentaries (and relying on the textual analysis of the

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[59] Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.13 (19). There is also an example of Augustine himself doing this: in his commentary on **Matt 27:9** (§41), he says that the reading "Jeremiah" is in the majority of copies and that "those critics who have studied the Gospel with more than usual care in the Greek copies, report that they have found it stand so in the more ancient Greek exemplars" (et qui diligentius in Graecis exemplaribus euangelium considerauerunt in antiquioribus Graecis ita se perhibent inuenisse) (NPNF 1.6:190). In other words, Augustine is depending on the testimony of more advanced Greek scholars.

earlier commentators, or on a comparison of the commentators' lemmata rather than biblical MSS). It is also possible that copies of edited biblical MSS by the likes of Origen remained available for later scholars in libraries or personal collections, and thus these later commentaries may reflect marginal notes on variants by the scholar who edited the MS. Although Jerome clearly did some pioneering work of his own, he is a clear example of this later trend to repeat earlier textual traditions rather than doing his textual analysis completely anew. What the references to variants therefore bear witness to is this variety of skills and scholarship, stretching from the relative freedom of scribal practices in the first generations and the resultant variety of readings and criticisms of the scholars, to the careful collations of Pamphilus and his pupils in an age when many writers stood on the shoulders of giants instead of reinventing the wheel.

1.3. Textual Criticism and Textual Analysis

The basic overview of modern NT textual criticism, followed by an examination of to what extent the explicit references to variants illustrate patristic textual analysis, allows us to compare the work of the church fathers to determine any points of similarity between ancient and modern textual scholarship. Since there were no "critical editions" of the NT composed by the early fathers to compare to modern critical editions, the best grounds for comparison is the criteria employed in individual discussions of variants. A helpful schema to begin with is the list of text-critical criteria laid out by Metzger and Ehrman (as used in Chap. 5, above):

1. External Evidence:
   (a) the date of the witness;
   (b) the geographical distribution of the witnesses;
   (c) the genealogical relationship of text and families of witnesses

2. Internal Evidence:
   (a) transcriptional probability, based on habits of scribes (give preference to: more difficult reading; shorter reading; reading not harmonized with parallels; less familiar term or less refined grammar);
   (b) intrinsic probability, based on what author would more likely have written (author's style; immediate context; harmony with author's usage elsewhere; Aramaic background of Jesus's teaching; priority of Gospel of Mark; influence of Christian community on transmission)[60]

If we condensed the practice of textual analysis by the fathers into a similar list, it might look like this (in closest parallel with the above list, not in order of priority):

1. External Evidence:
   (a) more ancient copies;
   (b) most accurate copies;
   (c) majority of copies;
   (d) priority of Greek over translations
2. Internal Evidence:
   (a) transcriptional probability, based on habits of scribes (give preference to: more difficult reading; more orthodox or more accurate reading);
   (b) intrinsic probability, based on what author would more likely have written (author's style; immediate context; harmony with author's usage elsewhere; historical and geographical accuracy)

In terms of the external evidence, one key difference for the fathers is that, understandably, they did not have the sheer abundance and diversity of MSS and versions that we have available today. It was not necessary for them to develop elaborate stemmas and theories of text types and textual families. However, this does not mean that they lacked any awareness of possible regional differences; Jerome and Augustine both acknowledged regional or recensional differences in theory, but not in application (see Chap. 5). For the most part, though, this was manifest in the difference between Greek and Latin versions. They also did not necessarily adhere to the modern principle that witnesses should be weighed rather than counted, since they at times appeal to the

[60] Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 302-4.

majority of copies; but, they also appeal to the more accurate or more ancient copies, so there is still a sense of evaluating the quality of the MSS.

For the internal evidence, the fathers also raised issues of both transcriptional and intrinsic probability. The primary differences with modern practice are two main suppositions that drive their logical assessments. First, the transcriptional probabilities (scribal habits) are generally based not on what is more likely as a simple human mistake, a slip of the eye or pen, as the modern criteria are based upon (although, there are a few examples of this), but on a fundamental distrust in the abilities and knowledge of scribes. Therefore, scribal errors are understood as due most often to their ignorance or carelessness, including both intentional and unintentional changes. Second, both transcriptional and intrinsic probabilities are grounded in another basic assumption: the scriptural authors (the evangelists and apostles) were not in error.[61] Thus, any inaccuracy in the text must necessarily be a later corruption by the scribes, whether intentional or unintentional. In application, then, while modern scholars would conclude that more accurate readings were later changes made to smooth out difficult passages, ancient scholars would assume the opposite, that scribes made the text more difficult due to their own lack of knowledge or understanding. One blatant exception to this is Augustine when he spells out the principle of lectio difficilior, preferring the more difficult reading because of the logic that a scribe would likely make the text more accurate rather than

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[61] I would not immediately define this as a doctrine of "inerrancy" in the modern sense, although it is clearly related—to compare the ancient and modern doctrines on that matter would be a separate dissertation. In terms of variants, what is described is that the evangelists were more familiar with Palestinian geography and with the OT than the scribes who followed, so errors in geographical names or citing the source of an OT passage are not the fault of the authors, who clearly were well-versed in such matters. The same idea is applied to the consistency between the Gospels in the case of the hour of the crucifixion (**John 19:14**), where the basic assumption is that all four Gospels originally read the same time, so a discrepancy must necessarily be the fault of later scribes.

less so; but in this conclusion he stands in direct contradiction to Jerome, who had very little faith in scribes, especially those of the earliest generation in the transmission of the text.

Where ancient and modern scholars differ the most is not necessarily in their criteria but in the goal and result. While modern text critics traditionally search for the original text, the fathers were interested in the most accurate text, with the assumption that the authors were generally more accurate than their copyists. In order to achieve the goal of establishing the original text, the modern discipline of textual criticism, as its own field of scholarship, is focused primarily on creating critical editions of the text. Other forms of "higher criticism" then build on this foundation, applying or discussing text-critical matters piecemeal as they arise in the discussion of specific passages. What the explicit references to variants among the patristic writings then give us a glimpse of is not textual criticism as a discrete field of study, but the "higher criticism" that uses text-critical principles only as a means to an end as these issues are encountered in the discussion of individual passages.

In this sense, it is ancient and modern *commentators* who have much in common: (1) most would not define themselves primarily as text critics, but they use textual criticism as needed when commenting on the text; and (2) because their interest is in commentary and application, they often present the variants and the options the variants bring rather than arguing for one reading or another. While on the latter count, it may seem that the ancients more often than moderns choose to present multiple readings without deciding between them, it is certainly not unheard of (nor uncommon) in modern commentaries for the scholar to offer an interpretation for a text that he or she may not

accept as original.[62] Therefore, what the present study shows is not ancient textual criticism per se, but textual criticism as applied in commentaries, homilies, and apologetics. It is textual criticism wed with exegesis.

If any of the fathers represented here may be called a text critic, it was Origen, and perhaps Origen alone—but he was a text critic of the OT. It was his edition (the Hexapla) that provided the foundation for all subsequent OT textual criticism by the next few generations of church fathers, pertaining to the Greek text. But Origen, as far as we can tell, did not apply the same comprehensive attention to the NT text. If anyone did so in the ensuing centuries, it would have been someone like Pamphilus or Lucian, but the results of their work have not survived distinctly enough for us to be sure of their individual contributions to recensions or editions of the NT text. Any work that was applied to correcting and editing the text, to creating a "critical apparatus," is most

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[62] I offer two examples, pulled randomly from the shelf at a local seminary library. Both of these commentaries are "popular," or more focused on exegesis and application rather than academic or scholarly; in other words, they do not typically refer to Greek terms or the apparatus of critical editions of the NT, and a reference to variants is the exception rather than the rule. In the first example, William Barclay's *The Gospel of Mark* (rev. ed.; Daily Bible Study Series; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), Barclay briefly discusses the ending of Mark (under the title "The Lost Ending") in the introduction, explaining that the "original form" ends at 16:8, which we know for two reasons: (1) 16:9-20 is not present "in any of the great early manuscripts; only later and inferior manuscripts contain them"; (2) the Greek style differs from the rest of the Gospel (p. 5). Despite this conclusion, the end of the commentary does include 16:9-20 along with a discussion of its meaning (as a summary written by a later author) and relevance for the church.

The second example is R. V. G. Tasker's *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960). At John 7:53, the story of the woman caught in adultery is included, although in brackets. The commentary begins, "Scholars are agreed that this section did not originally form part of St. John's Gospel, though it records a genuine incident in the life of Jesus. Not only does the overwhelming majority of the ancient Greek MSS omit it as this point, but many of the later MSS which include it here mark it with asterisks denoting that there was doubt about its position" (p. 110). The rest of this paragraph and the next explain the secondary nature of the pericope, then the remainder of the commentary on these verses discusses the content of the passage. At a glance, these two examples are not so far off from what we see among the ancient commentators. Both refer to the MS evidence only in general terms ("early manuscripts"; "inferior manuscripts"; "majority of the ancient Greek MSS") that sound much like the examples throughout the Catalogue. Both determine that the passage in question is not part of the original Gospel, and yet both include the passage in the commentary and offer an exegesis of it.

evident in the later MSS, through marginal notes and collections of commentaries (catenae) that included discussions of variants.

In the final analysis, then, were the church fathers naïvely ignoring MS evidence, as Kelhoffer puts it, or uncritical and indifferent, as Metzger says? On the contrary, the fathers clearly had their own standards and own set of criteria that they applied to the text. It is true, as Metzger states, that patristic textual criticism may be "unsatisfactory from the standpoint of modern textual criticism," but that only highlights that we are judging them by the wrong standard. The patristic scholars began with some fundamentally different assumptions about the text and its transmission than modern text critics; the materials they had to work with were more limited; and their ultimate goal, in the examples from their writings (which is a different matter than examining recensions themselves), is the meaning of the text rather than establishing the original text. This could perhaps even be phrased as a search for the original meaning rather than the original text (although "original" is a modern term, not one the fathers applied to the text, unless they were talking about the original language). Judged by the standards of their own day—or, even by the standards of classical Alexandrian textual criticism—Origen (for the Greek) and Jerome (for the Latin) were the pioneering textual scholars, and any application of textual analysis that followed was heavily dependent on these two (particularly Origen).

2. Insights from Patristic Textual Analysis for Modern Textual Criticism

If patristic scholars were working from their own set of assumptions when they applied text-critical criteria to the text, modern scholars who work from different

standards may not accept the church fathers' text-critical decisions. However, there may be other insights we can gain from the patristic approach to the text and its readings. The first place to look for potential insights is with the assumptions themselves. The fathers clearly valued the abilities of the scriptural authors more highly than the skills and knowledge of the copyists. While the fathers whose testimony we have for textual variants are not from the 1st century (and thus not contemporary with the authors), and most of them were later than the 2nd century, when the earliest copyists were at work, these fathers still lived much closer to the time of the NT's composition and earliest copying than we do today. We may not necessarily agree with their conclusions, but it is worth listening to their testimony.

On the matter of trusting scriptural authors over scribes, there are a couple of things that merit mention. First, the emphasis on the ignorance of the earliest scribes. As we consider the physical evidence from the papyri about scribal abilities during the 2nd and into the 3rd century, we should weigh the testimony of the scholars alongside this to see if they indeed have any insight about the scriptural or linguistic knowledge of those early scribes. This may add one more voice to the conversation about the quality of the early papyri and the proliferation of variants during the early period of copying. Origen and Jerome in particular note that the early scribes were pagans or unlearned in Scripture; if this is true, it may account for some of the early variants.

Second, along with this there is an emphasis on how early in the transmission process errors were proliferated. Thus, Eusebius describes how a mistake could be made in the very first copy and spread into all subsequent MSS, and Origen freely conjectures corrections where there are no variants. Even if we disagree with their conclusions on

these particular variants, it is worth considering their opinion: even as early as the late 2nd to early 3rd century, the fathers believed that original readings had been lost from their MSS. There are a few examples, some already well known, that may reinforce this notion. Metzger notes a number of these: the famous Freer logion, known only from one MS, is also cited by Jerome (**Mark 16:14** [§60]); the reading in **Rom 3:5** (§100) is known only in the margin of 1739 and the testimony of Origen (which ultimately represent the same textual witness), and the Sahidic version; in **Luke 22:36** (§71), Basil cites as the majority reading a variant extant only in Codex Bezae. Metzger also includes one more example, perhaps even more pertinent here: Origen repeatedly uses a reading in **Col 2:15** (§160) that is completely absent from the MS evidence, even from Rufinus's Latin lemma, so that Rufinus must explain the alternate reading in his translation of Origen's text.[63]

To this list I would also add a scholion attributed to Apollinaris on **Mark 6:8** (§51) for a pair of rare variants known primarily from Θ; a scholion on **Rom 3:9** (§101), attributed to Arethas, known in this exact wording only in a couple of late MSS; as well as a handful of other readings not included in NA27 (Origen on **Matt 21:5** [§33]; Severus on **Mark 16:2** [§54]; Origen on **John 3:34** [§82]; scholion on **Acts 14:26** [§97]). In addition, there is a variant cited by Epiphanius in **Matt 2:11** (§2) known only from the

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[63] B. M. Metzger, "The Practice of Textual Criticism Among the Church Fathers" *StPatr* 12 (1975): 345-46. Metzger also discusses (under a different category) another reading with limited external evidence: Ambrose refers to a variant in **John 3:6** (§81 in Additional Texts), known today only in the Old Latin and Old Syriac (which may point to an early Greek reading, no longer extant) (ibid., 348). Elsewhere, Metzger notes the variant from **2 Tim 4:6** (§170 in Additional Texts) cited in one of Origen's homilies as "a variant in Greek manuscripts of which nothing further is known to-day" ("Explicit References in the Works of Origen," 91); however, the homily is extant only in Latin translation, so the variation is likely a translational one inserted by Rufinus. Cf. W. L. Petersen, "What Text Can New Testament Textual Criticism Ultimately Reach?" in *New Testament Textual Criticism, Exegesis, and Early Church History: A Discussion of Methods* (ed. by B. Aland and J. Delobel; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 139-47, who similarly notes some examples of rare readings cited (but not discussed as variants) by 2nd-century writers, pointing out the value of the patristic material.

Protevangelium of James, which may or may not have been a reading found in copies of Matthew (see also examples of Origen's conjectures in the Additional Texts). What is significant about these rare readings is not simply that the fathers attest them, but that they consider these readings worth mentioning (while our modern critical editions do not). These examples of rare variants, along with their suspicion that original readings were lost early in transmission, both contribute to the notion that for all the readings extant today, there are still some readings that have been lost—perhaps even some readings that were original.

Along with the assumptions about scribes, the fathers also had assumptions about the scriptural authors and ultimately the divine authorship of the text. Although the principle of "lectio difficilior potior" is not phrased this way, it essentially implies that scribes knew better than authors because they smoothed out the rough places in the original text. (In the opinion of fathers like Epiphanius and Jerome, when the scribes tried to "fix" the text, they more often introduced greater problems.) Logically, it must at times be true that a scribe would more likely make a reading easier rather than create a new difficulty (as Augustine deduces). But it is also merits consideration, along with the intrinsic probabilities, whether the fathers may have been right in assuming that the evangelists or apostles were at times more knowledgeable than the copyists who transmitted their texts. In other words, for the most part the fathers would agree with the growing dissatisfaction with the rule of preferring the lectio difficilior.[64]

Another assumption about authorship that some modern text critics (namely, those who hold the same values) might find instructive is to consider the example of how

[64] For recent discussion on this axiom, cf. Epp, "Issues in New Testament Textual Criticism," 31 (esp. n. 37).

the fathers approached the divinely inspired text. On the one hand, even while acknowledging variants and sometimes judging decisively which reading belongs in the text and which does not, most often they were more interested in the meaning (the spirit) of the text than in the letter. This is not a matter of allegorical versus literal interpretation, since it found a home in both Alexandria and Antioch (although, Origen may have been more comfortable in letting multiple readings stand than were John Chrysostom or Theodore of Mopsuestia). Instead, it is an understanding that multiple readings or translations could lead to the same understanding of the text, and that the true inspiration lay with the meaning, not with the exact wording.

On the other hand, when the fathers did come to a textual decision that could cause potential difficulty in exegesis, they still had to grapple with how a divinely inspired text could hold a potentially errant reading. The whole literature on disagreements between the Gospels deals with the same issue, but regarding variants themselves, the prime example again is Augustine's discussion of **Matt 27:9** (§41). Augustine's application of the criterion of lectio difficilior leaves him in a dilemma: if Matthew did indeed write down the name of the wrong prophet, Augustine must explain why. Based on his understanding of the authority and inspiration of the text, he in principle excludes the possibility that Matthew was simply mistaken. This leads Augustine to two options: if this is what the text originally read, then either Matthew knowingly intended that reading, or the Holy Spirit knowingly inspired him to write it. One of his two solutions might sit well with modern scholars: the quotation in Matthew is a conflation from two prophets, and the prophet that Matthew names is one of the two sources for the conflation, if the less obvious of the two. What is interesting, and perhaps

instructive for some, is that Augustine can apply objective logic to the text without compromising his fundamental belief in the text's truth or authority. There may also be a number of other lessons to be gleaned from the fathers on how they approached their scholarship on the text from the position of their core beliefs.

Besides looking at the underlying assumptions, a second general area to look for insights from the fathers is in the goals or purpose of their textual analysis. First, the emphasis on the original text is not articulated by them. Where there is a comparable emphasis, it is on the most accurate or true text. Considering that they assume the authors were more accurate than the copyists, the accurate text was not necessarily that different from the original text, but it is still significant that the church fathers, and the ancient scholars in general, did not use this modern terminology. There is also another principle intertwined with this, although it was not articulated as such by the fathers: every text, as released into circulation by the author, will have its share of mistakes. Thus, classical editing (such as of Homer) was focused not necessarily on the author's wording but on the author's sense—if different wording would better express what the author was trying to say, then it was not inappropriate, and sometimes even preferred, to amend the text to clarify the meaning.

While this is clearly subjective and could easily be abused (and may be the cause for a number of the early variants in the NT text), there is also a truth to be found: the best text may not be the author's original, as it last left the author's hands, but the best edited copy of the author's original—in a modern sense, the difference between the MS an author initially submits to a publisher and the final published version (and, in some cases, the second revised edition that makes corrections to the first edition). Although the

ancient publication of books underwent a very different process, the part of the analogy that stands is that authors' initial copies always have mistakes. If we could truly reconstruct the *original* text (which is challenging to define anyway, hence Epp's emphasis on the multivalence of the term[65]), it would be full of "[sic]." One example of how the fathers deal with problems in the authorial text is Origen's discussion of a grammatical difficulty in **Eph 2:4** (§147); while he suggests this may be a scribal corruption, he also allows that it could be attributed to Paul himself since Paul declares himself "untrained in speech" (2 Cor 11:6). This is why, much later, Photius uses a similar explanation for a grammatical problem in **Eph 3:17** (§149) and then clarifies how the text should actually read to make the best sense—he conjectures the best, or most accurate, text.

Finally, there is the question of the ultimate goal of textual criticism, whether it is an end in itself or a means to an end. For the church fathers in general, the best form of the text was not the goal in and of itself but the foundation to move on to exegesis and interpretation (or, sometimes, to apology and debate). There are two issues involved here: (1) why anyone should put the effort into doing textual analysis; and (2) the personal responsibility of every exegete to engage in textual analysis for oneself. In other words, textual criticism and exegesis are integrally intertwined. This same principle has been articulated by Zuntz: "Here lies the methodological circle, or rather, the fruitful antinomy of all interpretation. In this field the light of proper perception springs from the

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[65] Epp, "The Multivalence of the Term 'Original Text.'"

continuous interaction of the two poles, critical philology and exegetical theology."[66] In stating this, Zuntz's true emphasis is on the second of the two points above, the same point made by Augustine, that every exegete should also participate in analyzing the textual readings for oneself.

Augustine's appeal to aspiring exegetes in his own time continues to have relevance today. To the average reader of the Greek NT who has either no skill or no interest in text criticism, the text of NA[27] and UBS[4] is an established and invariable text. But for the text critic, these editions are lists of suggestions—hence, the multiple articles and commentaries that disagree with the textual choices of the critical editions, and even the dissensions by Metzger himself in his *Textual Commentary* on the UBS text.[67] We can learn something from the ancients here, that each scholar must establish the best textual basis for exegesis rather than assuming there is only one authoritative form of the text (since, to accept someone else's choice of reading is also to accept, on that level, their interpretation); and to this they would add that when there is variation between the "best" texts, it is ultimately the meaning that matters, not necessarily the exact wording behind it.

This latter point speaks to the first of the two issues above, why anyone should participate in textual criticism. While there may be more than one acceptable answer to

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[66] Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 3. See also M. W. Holmes, "*The Text of the Epistles* Sixty Years After: An Assessment of Günther Zuntz's Contribution to Text-Critical Methodology and History," in Childers and Parker, *Transmission and Reception*, 89-113. To Zuntz's lament, first voiced in 1946, that modern exegetes leave the textual criticism to specialists and avoid the task themselves, Holmes replies: "how much more so today!" (89-90).

[67] For example, see 2 Cor 5:3 (B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2nd ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994], 511; cf. notes by additional committee members for 2 Cor 4:6, 14 [pp. 510-11]). The very format of the UBS apparatus illustrates this same point: the readings have been voted in by a committee and are rated by the degree of certainty or agreement.

this, the key answer illustrated by the present study is that textual analysis is always a means to an end. (Even for Origen's Hexapla, his purpose in creating it was not for the sake of the text itself but to have a basis for apologetics with the Jews.) What matters most is not the wording of the text, but the meaning. For those who, like the fathers, hold to the veracity and inspiration of Scripture, this may be a helpful principle to keep in mind. More important than the original form of the text, or even the most authoritative form of the text, is the interpretation of the text. The church fathers certainly had a high view of Scripture, but they did so with a knowledge that their copies of those Scriptures were full of variations. Many times, they were content to let those variations stand side by side, but that in no way diminished their view of the text or its meaning. Their faith in the text was not strictly wed to its exact wording. Thus, textual analysis could not be separated from exegesis, because sometimes the exegesis determined whether it was necessary to decide between alternate readings.

On the point of allowing multiple readings to stand side by side, many textual scholars may balk at such an idea. But as much as modern text critics would like to think that our goal is to weed out accretions to the original text, Eusebius's comment on the longer ending of Mark is probably much closer to the truth: that we dare not reject as spurious anything that appears in the text (see §55). The longer ending of Mark, the *pericope adulterae*, the reference to Jesus sweating blood—these variants generally rejected by modern textual critics still appear in most if not all translations of the Bible, if only in brackets or in footnotes (even the critical editions of the Greek NT have not excised them completely). And if they appear in the Bible, then commentators cannot easily overlook them, at least not without some explanation of why. This is the same

dilemma that the church fathers often found themselves in, and their solution was simple: (as Rufinus, or Origen, puts it [see §114 on **Rom 12:13**]) if both readings contribute to edification, let them both stand.

Alongside this, the (over-)abundance of English translations of the Bible is in many ways comparable to the situation of the fathers, where any two readers of their commentaries may encounter different readings in their text, and even more so with the Latin fathers who were faced with an (over-)abundance of translations themselves. This is another factor that makes Augustine's comments to budding exegetes in *On Christian Doctrine* especially relevant today. English readers of the Bible are once more in a situation where there is great plurality of readings available (this is not to ignore the fact that a variant and a translation are two different things, but for the reader who knows the text only in English and the variants only through the footnotes in the English edition, such a distinction may be moot). In practice, we may find that we are already not so far off from the situation of the fathers, or their exegetical choices when faced with multiple versions of a text.[68]

Overall, modern text critics, whether they adhere to the same set of beliefs and assumptions as the church fathers or not, may prefer not to participate in the same type of textual analysis. But, to decide with Burgon that the fathers were mere children in their understanding of textual criticism is to ignore the true pioneers that these men were

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[68] Since Jerome offered an anecdote about a sermon, I offer one as well: only a month before this study was completed, a visiting preacher at my church noted an alternate reading himself while citing Scripture. In the middle of quoting Matt 16:18, he said, "the gates of Hades, or Hell, depending on the version," and then passed on with the quotation without any further comment on the term in question. I could not help but notice how similar this statement is to many of the mentions of variants by the church fathers. The reading "Hades" or "Hell" was of no consequence to the point he was making (about Jesus establishing the church), so therefore he did not dwell on it; but, understanding that his audience might be using varying translations, he felt the difference was significant enough to merit mention.

regarding textual scholarship and exegesis. To judge them by modern standards would be to fall into the same folly as the anti-Origenists who judged his theology by terms that were anachronistic to his own day. But even when compared with modern standards, the fathers can at many points hold their own ground. They appealed to both external and internal evidence, both transcriptional and intrinsic probabilities. They evaluated external evidence for its quality or antiquity. But, in the end, they worked from different assumptions than many modern text critics and so reached different conclusions. Yet, that does not diminish the conclusions themselves, only our acceptance of them.

CONCLUSION

1. Nestle's and Metzger's Desideratum

To return to the initial desideratum stated by Nestle and Metzger (see the General Introduction), both hoped to see a list of explicit references to variants organized by time and locality to contribute to "the accurate localizing and the precise dating of the emergence and circulation of variant readings."[1] As pointed out especially in the General Introduction, the patristic material in general makes such an organization by time and location extremely difficult, and the fact that the fathers were so often dependent on earlier writers or traditions makes it even more challenging to pinpoint specific variants by time and place. We may therefore need to reconsider the value of a listing of explicit references to variants.

First, while it may often be difficult to determine a discussion's initial time and location, it is not impossible. At the very least, many of the fathers can be located by century and region. Thus, it is fair to compare the Antiochians with a potential Lucianic or Antiochene recension to look for evidence of what variants were known there and were accepted or rejected. For Jerome and Augustine, there is a great deal more information about precisely when and where they completed certain writings, allowing some standards for comparison, especially Jerome against the Vulgate or Augustine

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[1] B. M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies: In Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J. N. Birdsall and R. W. Thomson; New York: Herder, 1963), 95.

against the Old Latin. In other words, Nestle's and Metzger's desired result is not impossible to achieve, but the list of explicit references (and, more pointedly, the original discussions of particular variants) that can actually be assigned to a time and location would be much more limited than what is represented in the Catalogue.

Second, the other major hope of Metzger in particular, that such a listing would provide concrete evidence for when fathers are aware of variants, is still generally valid, although with qualifications. Again, the list of such concrete evidence would be more limited than the entire Catalogue. The only concrete witnesses are those fathers who made the original comments themselves, rather than repeating earlier authors or traditions. If indeed many of the discussions can be traced back to Origen, this would actually be quite helpful because he also attests an earlier period from which the MS evidence is relatively limited. Irenaeus is another early and invaluable example not only for the concrete evidence he provides for the reading 616 but also for his extensive discussion of the variant and its potential origin.

Besides the results that Nestle and Metzger specifically noted, there is also the information yielded by Metzger's own forays into this subject, regarding the textual criticism exhibited by the church fathers. Chapters 2 through 4 have essentially examined these practices in detail from a number of angles, with a summary of the criteria in Chapter 5, and a comparison with modern textual criticism in Chapter 6. Those results will thus not be repeated here. But this is perhaps the greatest fruit of this study, the extensive information on how and why the fathers discussed variant readings, and what relevance that may have for modern textual criticism.

2. Incidental Results from Examining Explicit References to Variants

Another great value of this study, however, is not the data it set out to collect and analyze—the concrete data for variants in particular times and locations, and details about patristic criteria for textual criticism—but the incidental information that it provides, particularly in the many ways that it requires us to qualify the list of explicit references and perhaps also to qualify our use of the patristic evidence in general.

First, lining up the different discussions of variants shows the incredible amount of dependence on previous scholarship, especially that of Origen. Jerome, although he was a skilled textual scholar in his own right, quite often adapted large portions of his commentaries from earlier writers, as at times did Ambrose and any number of other fathers. Time and again, all roads lead back to Origen. Although in many cases it cannot be proven, it is likely that even more of the discussions in the Catalogue originated with Origen than the hard evidence currently shows. In other words, even where Origen's commentaries on particular books are lost, some of his references to variants may live on in the work of subsequent scholars or among the scholia under a different name. This would be one interesting avenue of study for someone who would like to attempt to draw those lines of dependency on Origen more clearly than can be done here.

Second, this study puts a spotlight on how the church fathers referred to their MS evidence. For example, to look at Jerome's single discussion of **Matt 13:35** (§27) in isolation would make it seem that he is attesting the reading "Asaph" in all of the oldest copies of the Gospel; only in comparison with his other discussion of this variant (§28) does it become apparent that this reference to the "oldest" copies is based on his own conjecture. How many other references to "ancient" copies are based on assumption or

conjecture? In modern terms, we would prefer that Jerome say he is speculating that "Asaph" is the original reading. A similar issue arises with the references to "accurate" copies. Almost every one of these contexts (see Chap. 5) shows that the evaluation of the copies' accuracy is based on the father's evaluation of that particular variant in the light of other (typically internal) evidence. It is not that the MSS are considered accurate and therefore their reading in this verse is trustworthy, but vice versa, and so this external evidence is not truly external at all. Again, in modern terms, we would prefer that they say the reading found in these MSS is the most accurate based on other evidence. And, since so many of these discussions are dependent on earlier scholarship, how often when a father refers to "most" or "several" copies has he actually seen such copies himself rather than basing that information on what he heard or read from someone else? If we are to cite the fathers as evidence, especially that a particular reading was the majority reading at a given place and time, then these are all important issues to keep in mind.

Third, one particular patristic text provides the perfect example of the problems in working with the patristic material and why it is so important to produce critical editions of their works before depending on their testimony for textual criticism—in other words, why we must do text criticism on the fathers before we can rely on their evidence for text criticism of the NT. The example is the variant noted in **Mark 16:2** (§54), likely by Severus (the attribution of this homily is itself the first problem). The variant in question is the word ἔτι, which is rare enough that it is not even noted in NA^{27} or UBS^{4}. Lining up three different versions of Severus's text (with bold added to highlight the key differences) illustrates the need for textual criticism on the text:

> *Καὶ λίαν πρωῒ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον* **ἔτι· τὸ γὰρ ἔτι** τοῖς ἀκριβεστέροις τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἐμφέρεται, δηλοῦν ὡς πρὸς ταῖς ἤδη γεγενημέναις. . . . (PO 16.5:832, 834)

> *Καὶ λίαν πρωῒ τῆς μιᾶς Σαββάτων ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ μνῆμα.* **Ἔτι** τοῖς ἀκριβεστέροις τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἐμφέρεται δηλοῦν, ὡς πρὸς ταῖς ἤδη γεγενημέναις. . . . (PG 46:641)

> "Καὶ λίαν πρωῒ τῇ μίᾳ τῶν σαββάτων, ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον." **οὕτω γὰρ ἐπὶ** τοῖς ἀκριβεστέροις ἀντιγράφων ἐμφέρεται, δηλοῦν πρὸς ταῖς ἤδη γεγενημέναις. . . . (Cramer, 1:248-49)

If the Cramer edition were all we had to go on, we would be completely lost as to what "the most accurate copies" were attesting. In the Migne (PG) version, the ἔτι is at least present, but it appears to be part of Severus's statement, not the variant itself. Only the Patrologia orientalis (PO) edition makes it clear what the variant is, and when the three versions are lined up together, it becomes evident how the text became confused (or confusing) by the time it reached Cramer, in which version the ἔτι has become ἐπί and the scribe (or editor) has thus tried to make sense of it.

Fourth, and on a more positive note, some of the references to variants also reveal how the testimony of the fathers can contribute further evidence or further information about certain rare variants. Several of these examples are listed out toward the end of Chapter 6. There is one more instance not mentioned there which stands out for the insight it may provide in understanding the evolution of a variant. For **Eph 5:14**, both NA^{27} and UBS^{4} have only two readings, the text (ἐπιφαύσει σοι ὁ Χριστός) and one variant (ἐπιψαύσεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ). It is easy enough to see how a phi became a psi, thus changing the verb, but it is more of a leap for the subject to become the object. However, there is another variant, not included in the critical editions but attested by three of the fathers, an intermediate reading that may help to illuminate how these readings evolved: ἐπιψαύσει σου ὁ Χριστός. Here, the verb has changed, but the subject has not. With this intermediate step, it would be a much shorter leap for the

sigma in the pronoun to be taken as the end of the verb, and then a tau supplied for the remaining diphthong ου. Then, reading Χριστός as Χριστοῦ would be a natural conclusion. We cannot know for a fact that this is the process of how the variant emerged, but the evidence of the fathers is intriguing nonetheless and offers information that cannot be found in the apparatus of the critical editions.

3. Avenues for Further Research

Part of the purpose in this study was simply to provide the kind of listing of texts that Nestle and Metzger were calling for to provide a basis for future studies, however subsequent scholars may wish to use the data. Thus, the second half of this dissertation is nearly as long as the first half, an extended collection of texts and translations available as a reference tool. There are many potential avenues for research available with this information. In some ways, what is provided in this study is only a clear listing of information that was already known. In other ways, it may be new information, especially once some of these texts are set side by side. To this end, here are but a few suggestions for how the listing of reference to variants may be put to use.

Although the Catalogue provides a listing of the external evidence for the different variants, this study has not made use of that evidence for any grounds of comparison. Therefore, one valuable area of further research, and one that would likely accord well with the intentions of Nestle and Metzger, would be to evaluate how the variants noted by particular fathers line up with the textual evidence, and whether there are any patterns related to text types or families. A second area of study is connected to this, namely the examination of the explicit references to variants relative to the other textual evidence from each father. For example, a study of how Origen's or Augustine's

comments on variants line up with their citation of one or both readings in other places. Both types of studies would help to reveal whether the explicit references to variants are in agreement with what we already generally know of text types or patristic evidence, or if what the fathers say about the variants in any way deviates from the other types of evidence.

One other interesting grounds for comparison would be liturgical uses of Scripture, or more general research into the potential sources for the fathers' information about variants. The obvious sources, highlighted here, are the MSS and the testimony of previous fathers. But the example of Jerome's preacher for **Eph 5:14**, along with mentions of variants in John Chrysostom's homilies, raise the question of what aural or liturgical sources (whether recited liturgy or a text read in church) led to knowledge of variants. Thus, a study of explicit references to variants compared to lectionaries or liturgies would be interesting to see if there are any points of commonality, and if particular variants are either known or singled out for discussion because they were familiar from a worship setting.

4. Final Thoughts

In many ways, this study has highlighted the complications encountered when working with the patristic material rather than the positive results. It is true that working with the patristic material often poses road blocks and frustrations, and assembling critical editions and providing accurate translations may be largely thankless work that will neither rake in large royalties nor earn one tenure. Nevertheless, it is important work and a field rife with scholarly opportunities. And for all of its uncertainties, the patristic

material is valuable for NT text criticism. It should simply be approached with discernment and with an adequate understanding of its limitations. In this age when textual critics are increasingly interested in the social history of the text, the patristic material may be even more valuable than ever since so many textual discussions are intimately interwoven with the complex relationships, political and theological positions, and pastoral interests of the fathers themselves.